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INSURRECTION

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Haven't you ever, just once, felt like turning up late for work or felt like slipping
away from work early?
Haven't you ever, just once, felt the desire never to work again (without having
others work for you, that is)?
Has it ever happened that, outside your place of work, you have felt the same
distaste and weariness as you do inside the factory?
Haven't you ever thought about using your machine to turn out some instrument
for use outside the factory?
Haven't you ever deliberately destroyed products still on the production line or
already in storage?
Whilst sabotaging production, hasn't it ever occurred to you what fun it might be
to sabotage the weapons of repression (such as the bureaucratic machine, the cops,
the quality control people, the information services or the town planners)?
Haven't you ever felt like giving up reading the newspapers and putting your foot
through the television?
Haven't you ever had the disagreeable sensation that, aside from a few odd mo-
ments, you do not really belong to yourself and are becoming alienated from your
real self?
Haven't you ever felt the urge to burn some distribution factory (i.e. supermarket,
giant store or warehouse) to the ground?

Malatesta

FRA CONTADINI

A Discussion on Anarchy
pp. 45

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...True, that seems right to me. The earth and all the things of nature should belong
to everyone... But not everything was found right there in front of us.

George: Of course, many things have been produced by the work of man, in fact
the earth itself wouldn't be worth much if it hadn't been reclaimed and cultivated
by human effort. By rights these things should belong to whoever produced them.
How then do they find themselves in the hands of precisely those who have done
nothing at all to produce them?

Bert: But the landlords say their ancestors worked and slaved.

George: But they should say on the contrary that their ancestors have forced others
to work for them without payment exactly as they are doing today. History shows
that the workers' conditions have always been miserable and that, exactly as now,

why insurrection

OUR TASK as anarchists, our main preoccupation and greatest desire, is that of seeing the social revolution realized: terrible upheaval of men and institutions which finally succeeds in putting an end to exploitation and establishing the reign of justice.

For we anarchists the revolution is our guide, our constant point of reference, no matter what we are doing or what problem we are concerned with. The anarchy we want will not be possible without the painful revolutionary break. If we want to avoid turning this into simply a dream we must struggle to destroy the State and exploiters through the revolution.

But the revolution is not a myth simply to be used as a point of reference. Precisely because it is a concrete event, it must be built daily through more modest attempts which do not have all the liberating characteristics of the social revolution in the true sense. These more modest attempts are insurrections. In them the uprising of the most exploited of the masses and the most politically sensitized minority, opens the way to the possible involvement of increasingly wider strata of exploited in a flux of rebellion which could lead to the revolution but could also end up in the establishment of a new power or a bloody confirmation of the old one. In the case of the latter, although the insurrection begins as a liberating uprising it concludes bitterly with the re-establishment of State and private dominion. That is the natural way of things. Insurrection is the indispensable element of the revolution without which, with-

out a long and painful series of which, there will be no revolution and power will reign undisturbed in the fullness of its might. We are not to be discouraged. Once again, obtusely, we are preparing and struggling for the insurrection which will come about, a small part of the great future mosaic of the revolution.

Certainly, capitalism contains deep contradictions which push it towards processes of adjustment and evolution aimed at avoiding the periodic crises which afflict it; but we cannot cradle ourselves in waiting for these crises. When they happen they will be welcomed if they respond to the requirements for accelerating the elements of the insurrectional process. In the meantime, for our part, we are preparing ourselves and the exploited masses for insurrection.

In this sense we consider the time is always ripe for the next insurrection. Better a failed insurrection than a hundred vacillations which cause the failure of a hundred occasions from which it might have been possible for the final revolution to break out. We are therefore against those who say that the recent defeat of the revolutionary movement should make us reflect and conclude that we should be more prudent. We consider that the time for insurrection has come precisely because it is always time to fight, whereas procrastinating is useful only capital.

To prepare for insurrection means to prepare the subjective conditions (personal and material) which consent a specific anarchist minority to create the indispensable circumstances for the development of the insurrectional process. Although insurrection is a mass phenomenon, and would risk aborting immediately if it were not, its beginning is always the result of the action of a decided minority, a handful of brave ones capable of attacking the nerve centres of the partial objective to be reached.

We must be very clear on this point. The tasks of the anarchist struggle against power can be extremely varied, but all—in our opinion—must be coherently di-

rected towards preparing the insurrection. Some comrades may want to dedicate themselves to theoretical clarification, economic analyses, philosophy or historical research but all this must be immediately functional to the preparation of that minority capable of realizing the insurrection, acting in such a way that the masses participate as widely as possible or that at least that they do not hinder it.



Some comrades might consider the insurrection realizable in the near future (not put off to infinity), others that it can be realized right away: this can determine a division of tasks, in the sense that the former will be inclined to interest themselves more in the problems of revolutionary culture, but their final aim must be the same. Otherwise the rebel forces, who need precisely clarity to organize action and not chatter to put it off, would be lulled to sleep.

The minority's task of preparation is therefore twofold: on the one hand that of being sensitized to problems at the level of the class struggle which are not only military and political but principally of a social and economic nature. Following that, concrete, specific and detailed preparation with the insurrection in view.

Once again, we insist: the preparation of the wide masses can in no way be one of the pre-conditions of the revolution. If we were to wait for all the masses to be prepared for this grandiose task we would never do anything. We are convinced that the preparation of the great masses will more than

anything be a *consequence* of the revolution, and perhaps not the most immediate one. On the contrary, the revolutionary anarchist minority must be prepared for the historical task which awaits them.

Let us also eliminate the argument of "purity". We do not only participate in insurrections led by anarchists but also in all the other insurrections which have the characteristics of the people in revolt, even if for some reason it is our future enemies, the stalinists, who are leading them. In that case we should try to conquer a better place for ourselves in the struggle itself, during the events, defending as far as possible our programme of total liberation which we shall counterpose to the banally economic ones of the authoritarians. It will be the insurrection itself to verify the rest.

The insurrection is a task to be accomplished right away. But with what concrete means? We have seen that the specific minority must take charge of the initial attack, surprising power and determining a situation of confusion which could put the forces of repression into difficulty and make the exploited masses reflect upon whether to intervene or not. But what do we mean by specific minority? Perhaps the revolutionary movement in the wide sense? These questions require a clear answer.

Let us begin with the widest hypothesis. From the point of view we are interested in, the revolutionary movement as a whole cannot be considered a specific minority capable of realizing the insurrection together. It presents a whole series of contradictions which in turn mirror the contradictions of the society in which we are living. To the ideological model corresponds organizational groupings which end up putting theoretical prejudice before the immediate interests of liberation. Moreover, the analytical formulae of a large part of the revolutionary movement are of an authoritarian character, therefore envisage the conquest of the State and not its immediate destruction. They



foresee its claimed use in an antibourgeois sense and not its disappearance. This part of the revolutionary movement therefore clearly have no interest in preparing for insurrection right away as they delude themselves that time is on their side, crumbling away the supporting base of capitalism and preparing the revolutionary situation without the dangerous anti-chamber of the insurrection. We would thus find this section of the revolutionary movement to take an anti-insurrectional position, going as far as (as we have seen in many cases recently) attacking and denouncing the anarchist comrades who support the opposite thesis. We conclude at this point that it is not possible to widen the concept of the specific minority. Hypothetically, when the stalinists unleash their insurrectional process, either because they are convinced that the revolutionary conditions are ripe or because they are drawn by the solicitations of the base who are not interested in ideological refinements, then our task will be that of participating in the insurrection with all our forces, to fight in the concrete field of struggle and find there the necessary space for our ideas. In

the case of the contrary where it is we who are the initiators and proposers of the insurrection, we might quite possibly find this part of the revolutionary movement to be in an opposite position or, at best, in the position of waiting.

Let us now see if the anarchist movement as a whole can be considered a specific minority capable of eventually realizing insurrection. The conclusion is negative yet again. The contradictions within the movement are immense and mainly due to the fears and restraints which a restricted group of pinchbecks have carefully seminated within it. The movement today resembles an old coat covered in patches which only with a great deal of good will remembers its past splendours. The flight towards hypothetical forms of elitist interventions such as the attempt to impose preconstituted analyses or catechisms ready for use, or when it claimed to supply the whole movement with the final analysis to be put into practice right away, has proved a failure. The same flight backwards towards anarcho-syndicalism which could not fail to leave both the exploited as a whole and the revolutionary comrades disappointed. And

then the wider and ascertained politics of the ostrich, of hiding behind the fear of provocation in order to do nothing, only to intervene after the event, always with the scales at hand to weigh, judge and condemn those few comrades who were doing anything at all, even if circumscribed and limited. From this part of the movement there remains but the name, the symbol, a few old comrades, a few young comrades old before their time, a few optimists who never lose hope, parchment mummies in their little shop. The great number of active comrades who form the revolutionary part of the anarchist movement and who are ready to begin the struggle must not be discouraged by Cassandras and birds of ill omen. Action is the measure for distinguishing beyond symbols and declarations of principle.

It is precisely the comrades who are available for action who make up the specific minority. They will be the ones to prepare and realize the insurrection in the ways and forms which the experience of the revolutionary struggle as a whole has transmitted to us, and taking into consideration the recent modifications of the State and the bosses. The method cannot fail to take account of these minimal organizational forms of the base which will have to solve the various problems which will arise during the insurrectional preparation. In these organizational forms the responsibility for the work to be done must obviously fall on the revolutionary anarchist comrades and cannot be left to goodwill or improvisation. At this stage the very rules of survival impose the indispensable conditions of security and caution. The urgency of action puts an end to pointless chatter.

There is more to be said of the actions carried out in minimal structures of intervention by the specific minority as just identified. These actions cannot be considered purely from the point of view of "propaganda by the deed". Their aim, in fact, is not that of giving an example or of influencing a wide range of sympathizers. Certainly this empirical aspect also exists, bearing in mind that the maximum alliance which will guarantee the success of future plans is that of the masses in revolt, but this aspect is easily recuperated by the mechanism of capitalist information which

transform it into goods retailing it through the newspapers, television, cinema, books, etc. The truth is that the specific minority themselves, through realizing action, have the possibility of making something clear to others if they understand something themselves in the moment of the action itself. The action therefore means education through action, and education of oneself and others. If we consider that we know everything and entrust exclusively in our own knowledge in the moment of action, we place into the hands of capitalism a repetitive mechanism which inserts itself perfectly within the generalized mechanism of capitalist production which is, above all else, repetition to infinity.

The action of the specific minority must therefore consist not of an interruption of learning at one's own cost as to what the reality of the struggle is, but a gradual and complete transformation of one's own learning in showing others how one learns to understand the reality of the struggle. If the action of the specific minority gives an example of anything it gives the example of how one learns to single out and strike the enemy, and not how one teaches. The right action at the right time becomes the substance of the individual and specific attack and symbol of all the possible future attacks, and this unfurling of a moment which has not yet reached maturity is the maximum level of intervention which the minority reaches operating in the reality of the struggle. The class struggle characterizes the conflict in act and is the element which allows the concrete action of the specific minority. Within it action transforms itself continually from attempt to understand to attempt to teach. Cancelling the first moment everything drowns in repetition, cancelling the second, everything drowns in decision.

In the continual flux of the class struggle one finds everything, teachers and pupils. In it everything finds its right place within the relationship of strength. Whoever has not learned from their own mistake can demonstrate nothing to others, and an eminent way of not learning is precisely by ceasing to learn, of thinking that the time has come to teach and that is all. Through the filter of the class struggle the me



mory of the revolution unfolds slowly becoming something which can be handed down. In action this memory is handed down concretely and becomes perceptible to others at the moment in which it is reflection and criticism for the person who carries out the action himself.

Each individual minimal structure of intervention which acts within the specific minority runs the risk of placing itself in dialogue with the revolutionary movement as a whole and, sometimes with the whole mass of the exploited, if the sense of one's action is not imposed correctly. Taking ourselves as an isolated part in the face of so many references we illude ourselves that the whole movement and the exploited, their sort and the sort of the revolution, depends on us; we expect who knows what from what we are doing; we remain frustrated by the superficiality of the response and the general incomprehension. The revolutionary struggle is like a wavy sea against which to struggle would be vain folly, it is necessary to adapt ourselves to the direction of the waves, to swim sometimes strongly and sometimes lightly, to gather the impetus of life which the sea hides within it to reach the desired goal. In this difficult art of swimming is hidden the political meaning of minority action. The latter puts emphasis on its class significance, exploding suddenly as a fruit of the revolutionary memory and as indication for the struggle now in act.

We think therefore that the action of these minimal structures are yet again indispensable—if correctly chosen—for the preparation of that insurrectional process which we consider the immediate task of all anarchists and which cannot be postponed. Far from being a contrast between the two things—as some have tried to point out to us—we consider that they are complementary and indissociable. The basic work of the minimal structure of intervention sums itself up in the whole work, of an organizational and general nature, of the specific minority as a whole. The insurrection will be, yet again, the acid test of what has been done, cause and effect at the same time of that modifying of relationships of strength which consent the opening of the doors of the revolution.

dossier

COMISO

Comiso, a small town of 28,000 inhabitants in the south east of Sicily, has been chosen to house the largest arsenal of Cruise atomic missiles in Europe. If the local population does not mobilize soon to prevent this criminal manoeuvre decisively along the lines which have been successful in places such as Larzac in the south of France (where a shepherds and peasants managed, after years of occupation and struggle, to regain their land from the French State's nuclear project), not only Comiso, but the whole of Sicily will shortly be transformed into a militarized desert.

The foundations for this US strategy have already been laid (see 'American bases in Sicily, p. 10). The Cruise missile base, with its accompanying contingent of 15,000 US technicians and soldiers, is planned to become the nerve centre to link up the already existing structures, in turn preparing to house this mobile arsenal of death during their intended excursions throughout Sicilian territory, for that is the intention: to move the missiles throughout Sicily in lorries to programme their genocidal trajectories to Russia, Libya, or wherever else US interests feel themselves to be threatened.

Certainly, for the Sicilians the perspective of a foreign domination is nothing new: from the Romans, Arabs, Byzatines, Normans, French, Spanish and Piedmontese, the exploited of

the island have known domination and submission, the bourgeoisie dealings and enrichment. No doubt this fact also influenced the American assassins' choice, complementary to the island's strategic position in the Mediterranean. The long suffering proletariat of the island (once a fertile garden, the granary of the Roman Empire) deliberately kept below poverty level by capital concentration in the north, are so accustomed to foreign invasion that it has become almost a way of life. An army of social scientists have been studying the *coup*, and the first of the invaders have arrived, especially chosen Italo-American families, nice people with nice children and lots of nice dollars to spend on rents, cars, furnishings, etc, in such a way that the most avid of the shopkeeping and commercial class and the most alienated part of the bored youth far from the explosions of rage in the northern metropoli are beginning to hope that the American dream has finally reached their doorsteps. Not so for the thousands of unemployed farmhands who fill the *piazze* at dusk in the hope of finding work for the next day (with the chance of about one day out of every fifteen), the thousands of proletarian housewives incarcerated in the drought-stricken quarters of the town (running water two hours a day, yet Comiso is built upon a natural spring and underground wells containing millions of litres of water), the hundreds of building labourers deliberately made unemployed through the political strategy of antiseismic laws (where the threat of earthquake prevents them from building two-storey houses and at the same time permits the installation of an atomic bomb plant) in order to render them, out of desperation in a land where the misery of social security sounds like an Arcadian dream, favourable to the base as bringer of jobs to the area. All these strata and many more are profoundly against the arrival of the Americans and their deadly wares. Why have they not done anything about it then?

As well as a certain defeatist and longsuffering attitude, as well as the mafiosi politicians of the Christian Democracy and the Socialist Party (Socialist "defence" minister Lagorio at national level, and mayor Catalano of Comiso) who signed the agreement to house the missiles, great responsibility lies with the local political forces who claim to be against the base, in particular the Communist Party which still holds considerable credibility in the area. This party, the largest communist party in Europe, can at the drop of a hat mobilize a demonstration of 100,000 people by laying on buses and bringing them from all over Sicily and the rest of Italy, and this has been their strategy: to call for a massive peace march, a day of letting off steam, shouting of slogans, dancing in the fields then, home to wait for the next directive. A few of their leaders have participated in symbolic limited hunger strikes; a petition has been signed including 12,500 signatures from Comiso alone. Good democratic, totally ineffective dissense. The CUDIP¹—CP initiative—permanently in existence in Comiso, is another democratic vent, as is substantially the international peace camp which includes the MIR², various colours of pacifists, buddhist monks, etc. Their good intentions are exceeded only by the ineffectiveness of their gestures which have until now included the construction of a wall of cardboard boxes in front of the airport, the drawing of corpses on the streets of Comiso, debates on theories of pacifism, encounters with archbishops, and are always available for discussion with other expressions of the power structure such as police, politicians, the Pope, etc. Even the FLM³ from Milan, reputed to be one of the most combative unions in Italy, in their only public appearance during the week their delegates spent in Comiso, simply covered the piazza Fonte Diana in multi-coloured paper doves and gave a talk with no precise indications. In the zoological park that Comiso had become, concrete proposals of struggle were essential.

Anarchist groups *Rivolta e Liberta'* of Catania, and Ragusa anarchist group have been working to this end since May this year. May, June and July were spent doing a series of outdoor meetings in Comiso and the twelve or so surrounding towns and villages, with bookstalls, mass distribution of leaflets containing counter-information concerning the base and urging workers in the area to organize against it.

An international anarchist conference was held in the municipal sports ground in Comiso July 31 and August 1 to discuss

the position of the anarchist movement on the struggle in course and to measure the participation of the movement at the level of regular space in anarchist publications, printing of posters, radio programmes, subscriptions, etc. In spite of the terrific heat the conference (attended by about two hundred comrades) was fairly positive, and culminated in a public meeting in the piazza Fonte Diana where comrade Alfredo Bonanno talked to the comrades and the people of Comiso (male workers and unemployed, the women of Comiso do not circulate freely and the female comrades went to talk to them in their places of repression, i.e. the home), denouncing the criminal US project and urging those present to organize to fight it.

The meeting was also the scene of an antimilitarist action: anarchist comrade Pippo Scarso who lives in the Ragusa area and is extremely active in the work against the base, made a declaration as to why he had refused to turn up for military service when called up the previous month, (see p. 15) and tore up his call up card. None of the hundreds of carabinieri surrounding the *piazza* budged to arrest him—they realized the local sympathy was strong and that an arrest would be counter-productive. Pippo is still working at Comiso, he has been informed that he is to be tried for "instigation to commit a crime" as well as do twelve months' sentence for objection against the armed forces. After the meeting comrades marched in the dark to the Magliocco airport, proposed site of the missile base. The police presence was massive but the demonstration did not allow itself to be provoked and the point was made, at this point symbolically only: that if we want to prevent the base we must go towards it, not from it as all the previous grandiose marches had done.

As the weeks went on, however, the comrades realized that there was a positive response to their efforts but that it was necessary to go beyond counter-information and suggestions. A concrete organizational proposal was necessary as the logical consequence of their discourse. It was necessary to find an organizational form which would automatically, through its methodology and general principles, make the class selection necessary for a direct attack on the base. The form chosen was the self-managed League, an autonomous, anti-bureaucratic, anti-hierarchical, mass organism (see *Document* p. 11) which can be formed even by two or three people, but always in the optic of a quantitative growth and with the sole and unique aim of occupying and destroying the base. The League as instrument of struggle is not foreign to the local peasants and farmhands who used this method in the years following the war to occupy the land and successfully expropriated it from the landowners. Many of the townspeople of Comiso have also known the experience of mass rebellion. Comiso was one of the major towns in Sicily to rise up against the Italian State's call back to arms at the beginning of 1945. Exhausted and disheartened workers returned from the front to find their families in abject poverty and they refused to return to fight. A great antimilitarist insurrection took place in Comiso, Ragusa and many of the nearby villages, and the State's tanks and machine guns did not intimidate the *Comisani* then. It is towards this situation of mass rebellion that the work carried out by the anarchist comrades in the area is directed.

The month of August was spent preparing for this next phase in the struggle, and in September small premises were opened near the centre of Comiso, a co-ordinating office as point of reference, communication and support for the Leagues which were beginning to form in the area. The whole of the ground covered in the early months was returned to: Over twenty outdoor meetings, thousands of leaflets distributed, *Document* relative to the Leagues printed, radio and television programmes, etc. The results to date have been encouraging. There are now almost ten selfmanaged Leagues in the area, and the terminology and project which they are proposing has become popular knowledge. In Vittoria, a town of 40,000 inhabitants 6 km from Comiso, 400 school pupils came out on strike spontaneously on reading the leaflet from the Coordinamento (see p. 9). They have since formed a League of students whose first initiative was that of leafletting all the other five major secondary schools in Vittoria, calling them to an imme-

diate strike and outdoor assembly. Within an hour the piazza Gramsci was filled with over a thousand 15-18 year olds, enthusiastically discussing the problem of the base and the mystifications that surround it. The almost immediate arrival of police and carabinieri did not deter them, some of whose names were taken in the controls that followed when the major part of the meeting had dissembled. Debates are now being organized within the schools, and in Comiso a students' League has been formed. There also exists an intersectoral League in Comiso, as well as in Pedalino, Chiaramonte, Belpasso, Catania. In the county of Mistretta, a mountainous area in the north of Sicily between Messina and Palermo, a self-managed League against the missile base at Comiso has also been formed. This area has recently been chosen by the government to become a firing range for the Italian army. The large mountainous area is at present an important sheeprearing area, and the local shepherds, determined to fight the decision, have forced the 13 local mayors, many of them Christian Democrats, to go against their party's criminal plans.

Another very important area which has been reached by the comrades through the *Coordinamento* is that of the 3,000 workers of the ANIC petrol refinery in Gela, in south western Sicily. The Americans now have over fifty per cent shares in the company which is at present under restructuring, i.e. sacking of 500 workers, another 700 due to laid off. Clearly once the Americans have not only financial but also military control of the area, they will not hesitate to close this now out of date plant which no longer interests them. Their health (another worker was killed there two weeks ago) and environment ruined by poisonous fumes, the only perspective that faces the workers there is to join the already hundreds of unemployed in the town square every morning in the vain hope of finding a day's labouring. The solution of the past—to pack the cardboard suitcase and join the assembly lines of Switzerland and Germany—is no longer even open to them. Clearly they have every interest in organizing in first person to fight the arrival of the Americans and to create a force capable of imposing their demands on the structures of economic power. Their interest in the contents of the leaflets re the Leagues and eventual occupation and destruction of the base was great, to such an extent that the morning shift did not go in when the bell rang, and the servants of the management rang for the police. The comrades present were driven to the police headquarters and threatened with expulsion from the area with sinister menaces of what would become them should they return as they said they would. The ANIC workers meanwhile had obliged a trade union and CP representative to go to the police to get the comrades out. Since then two more leaflets have been distributed at the ANIC, and a meeting held in the main square of Gela with several hundred workers and unemployed present. On the workers' request attempts are being made to hold a general assembly with them inside the factory, project which has obviously met with the obstructionism of the unions. However, this area remains one of potential explosion.

The forces of repression in all their forms, police, politicians, mass media, etc, are doing what they can to obstruct the work of the *Coordinamento*. Open attempts to intimidate, spreading of rumours, printing false information are but a few of the well worn techniques that have been put into effect until now. The work is continuing, and comrades are determined to intensify it over the next weeks so that the occupation of the base should be possible in the spring. If things continue as they are going there is every chance that this will be possible.

It is necessary for anarchist comrades everywhere to be aware of what is going on in Comiso and realize that this is not a local problem, but one which concerns the whole of Europe and the world. All comrades can participate in the struggle, either by coming to Comiso themselves, or keeping informed and distributing counter-information in their own areas of struggle. Financial support is essential to meet the expenses which go far beyond the possibilities of the local comrades.

THERE IS STILL TIME TO PREVENT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CRUISE MISSILE BASE AT COMISO!

steps and countersteps of a project of death

1979

DECEMBER 6. In accord with the US the Cossiga government officially decides to house Euromissiles in Italy and has full support of the majority parties. A determining role is played by the PSI¹, totally subservient to American interests, authorizing the government to sign production agreements. The only parties to pronounce themselves against the missiles were the PCI², who asked for a six months' suspension, the PR³, PDUP⁴ and the independent left.

Of course the whole thing was hushed up and no one continued to show their dissent until—

1981

SPRING. News begins to leak re the placing of the missiles. The site chosen is the Magliocco airport situated three kilometres from Comiso, a town of 28,000 inhabitants in south-east Sicily in the centre of a vast plain cultivated with olive groves and vines and greenhouse produced crops. The area immediately surrounding the airport (which has been abandoned since 1972) is also cultivated. The government justifies the choice of site by declaring the area almost deserted. The base is programmed to house 112 atomic Cruise missiles of American fabrication (General Dynamics).

Discussion and unrest in the Ragusa area in all the towns and villages which by their position would be immediately affected by the base.

In Ragusa anarchist comrades distribute leaflets, intervene in conferences and dedicate a great deal of space to the problem in their paper *Sicilia Libertaria*, denouncing the criminal decision of the Italian and American militarists, placing it in the context of the underdevelopment and colonialism of which Sicily is a victim.

AUGUST 8. Government officially declares that missiles are to be installed at Comiso. The construction of the base is to take six years and 200 billion lire to be spent by the NATO for the infrastructure.

Once again the politicians emerge on the subject—

Regional president, Christian Democrat Mario d'Aquisto states that the region cannot cope with the aversion to the base already manifested by the local autonomies and social forces.

The mayor of Comiso, Salvatore Catalano (Socialist Party), declares, "My council and I will do everything we can to prevent Comiso becoming a nuclear firing range. We will leave no stone unturned to prevent the actuation of this decision."

All declarations in the heat of the moment, they soon returned to positions conforming to those of "democratic" parties.

The DC publishes a document accusing the PCI of pro-sovietism, saying that the NATO operation is one of defence.

Catalano the Socialist mayor says it is not possible to ignore Lagorio's (Socialist Party defence minister) guarantee of compensation for the base, although laments the lack of consultation at local level.

The PCI also redimension their declarations, asking for the base to be "frozen" while awaiting the outcome of the Geneva peace negotiations.

SEPTEMBER

The only forces who remain the field of struggle are the revolutionary comrades, among whom the Ragusa anarchists and the comrades of *Lotta continua per il comunismo* who form a *Gruppo Promotore* against the installation of the base. With leaflets and outdoor meetings they denounce the government's decision and the broken promises of the parties who declared themselves to be against the base.

In Comiso the CUDIP⁵ is formed, intending to express its dissent from the government's decision. The CUDIP has in Cagnes, ex PCI deputy, ex-mayor of Comiso, its major promoter and president.

On power's side the project is developed

The number of soldiers stationed at the airport is increased.

Lagorio pays an unexpected furtive visit to inspect his future creature of death.

The Americans, for their part, decide to increase their influence and presence in Sicilian soil at economic level in particular in the chemical industry. By forming the ENOX society, a fusion of the Italian State ENI with the American multinational Occidental, they gain control of the ANIC in Gela, Montedison at Syracuse and the Petrolchimica in Augusta, the three major petrol refineries in southern Italy.

The *Gruppo Promotore* against the installation of the base publish a single issue *Contro la Guerra* (against war) and call for a national conference with the same theme.

OCTOBER 11. *Gruppo Promotore* hold national conference in Comiso with 2,000 comrades present from all over Italy. Intense debate starting from three themes introduced by promoting group: imperialism and war; militarization of territory; waste of environment due to construction of base.

OCTOBER 11. On the same day as the conference the CUDIP organize peace demonstration, changing date from October 4 to create confusion and boycotting of conference. Later *Sicilia Libertaria* reports in an article entitled 'Between boycotting and militance': "... the Conference differed from the other folkloristic demonstration of the afternoon organized and orchestrated in puppetlike fashion (majorettes, bands, town hall banners), march which took place backwards, ie, left the airport (the objective of struggle) to reach the town."

Following the march of October 11 Peace Committees spring up in Sicily and all over Italy on the model of the CUDIP with the aim of spreading the struggle against the base all over Italy. These committees, however, being the expression of the various parties and similar structures (PCI, PDUP, DP, PR, etc) do not manage to go beyond analytical wrangling, peace marches and conferences.

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER. Many marches, imposing and significant for their number of participants (17 October—50,000 in Turin, 24 October—300,000 in Rome, 25 October—100,000 in Milan, 28 October—50,000 in Venice, 29 October—70,000 in Vicenza, 28 October—170,000 in Florence, 29 November—50,000 in Palermo), but

not so for their content, a general request for "peace", and the *suspension* of the construction of the base at Comiso, and even less so for the indication and objectives of concrete action to stop the construction of this temple of death.

The logic of the PCI and its satellite parties is not that of giving precise objectives of struggle to prevent the construction of the base, their interests lies rather in mobilising as many people as possible so as to have as much weight as possible at parliamentary level.

The need to develop and concentrate the struggle in Comiso and other places where imperialism is trying to put its plans into effect and to give oneself precise objectives becomes the subject of wide debate in the revolutionary movement and within the Gruppo Promotore.

The comrades of *Lotta continua per il comunismo* maintain that it is necessary to break the social pact in the places of arms production, energy and informatics, making the objective that of working to create a mass movement of antagonism in Italy. The Ragusa anarchist comrades, not agreeing with this analysis, saw instead in Comiso the focal point of the struggle as point of departure for successive stages and more advanced perspectives.

For the anarchists in Catania on the contrary the struggle at Comiso cannot be considered a "political battle". The conflict assumes, from the beginning, a social and revolutionary nature and must address itself immediately towards solutions—in the short and medium term—of an insurrectional nature. They criticise the *Gruppo Promotore* for having lost themselves in great specialized analyses on imperialism and of not having made a class analysis re the problem of the missile base. The methodology of struggle is therefore that of attack, and the objectives to strike are those responsible for the decisions concerning the installation of the base and the structures of American interests in Sicily, national and international capital.

DECEMBER

The contradictions within the revolutionary movement are great and there is a split in the Gruppo Promotore

1982

FEBRUARY 13. NATO meeting in Brussels where news leaks out that the order to fire the missiles could only be given by the American president, and that Italy would only have the right to a "political veto". Moreover it was learned that the missiles are to be transferred every three months to other areas of Sicily, and in the case of conflict the lorries on which the launching ramps are placed will be dispersed within a range of 350 km. Expected cost of the base doubles from the 200 billion lire stated in August to 400 billion.

MARCH 5. News comes out that the plane which exploded in flight on June 27 1980 where 81 people were killed had been struck by a missile fired by American naval forces during an exercise in the Ustica area.

MARCH 26. Work begins on construction of the base. Contracts given to Ragusa firm, ICI. Preparations are made to demolish the old structures of the Magliocco airport, and for this receives 825 million lire.

APRIL 4. Sicilian peace committees, after long period of inactivity, organize another peace march in Comiso. It is obvious that the parties within the committee have no intention of directing the spontaneous will to struggle and continue to operate as a safety valve, again organizing the march to start off from the airport and walk away from it. 80,000 people participate in the demonstration.

While the opposition to the base does not find the means to concretize its will to struggle, squeezed between the instrumentalisation of the PCI and hangers on and the inadequacies of the revolutionary movement which does not know how to come out of its shell into the social field of struggle with actions and indications, power continues its work.

APRIL 4. Another criminal episode due to militarization takes place. The internal flight Milan-Palermo is almost hit by a missile which explodes 2 miles from it. There were 115 passengers aboard, and the event took place in the same airspace, between Ustica and Ponza, as the previous "accident". This time there is a NATO exercise in course, Distant Drum 81.

JUNE 4. In same airspace a plane carrying 100 passengers is obliged to turn back because of unknown fighters crossing its flight. Again there is a NATO sixth fleet operation in course. Following numerous complaints American high officials explain the operation is due to end 26.6.82 and that perhaps it would be better to suspend all flights in the zone of exercise until then.

At the same time the Americans intensify their military occupation of Sicilian soil. The population of Pantelleria denounce the presence of about 300 American soldiers in the area and news leaks out that a project exists to build a NATO base similar to the one intended for Comiso also in that area.

The old barracks of the Magliocco airport are to be rebuilt to house the first thousand American soldiers.

JUNE 4. Defence minister Lagorio, supreme Architect of the atomic armament project, sends invitations to participate in the contest for contracts for the base to 13 Sicilian firms, prevalently Catanese: Ceap-Immobiliare Siciliana, Ciem, Craci, Condotte-Buscemi, Costanzo, Compagno, Mario-Rendo-Guardiani, Ugo Rendi, Pizzarotti Solteidile; Mec-Ipresit; Saisep; Ici-Provera e Carassi; Ivrate-Lodigiani. Most of these firms have strong links with the Catania and Palermo mafia and some of these contractors have since been charged with fraud and have arrest warrants pending.

On the front of the struggle against the base, following the split within the Gruppo Promotore, the comrades of Ragusa anarchist group and the anarchist group Rivolta e Libertà of Catania engage themselves in working to coagulate the mass antagonism towards the base, giving the clear indication that the only way to stop it being built is for the whole population to occupy the site, and that now is the time to organize with that aim in view.

JUNE/JULY

A series of outdoor meetings are held in Comiso and the fifteen or so surrounding towns and villages. Counterinformation re the effects of the base was distributed in the form of leaflets, photographic exhibitions, bookstalls accompanying the meetings. The response was positive, and the comrades realized that their analyses encountered the true feelings of a very large part of the population, the part who have nothing to gain and everything to lose by the presence of the base and its side collateral effects. Acting on the indications which emerged from the population, the comrades took it upon themselves to suggest selfmanaged Leagues as the optimal organizational form to prepare for the occupation and destruction of the base, based on a project of permanent conflictuality and hard direct struggle.

JULY 26. Pacifist camp opens in Vittoria, 6 kilometres from Comiso.

JULY 27. Pacifists stage sit in in front of the airport.

JULY 31/AUGUST 1. International anarchist conference in municipal sports ground of Comiso. About 200 comrades were present and various groups undertook to carry the Comiso struggle to their own reality, to publish bulletins re the struggle against the base, and to support the struggle by subscriptions. Sunday August 1, meeting in

evening in Piazza Fonte Diana, Comiso, attended by about 150 comrades and twice as many local workers and unemployed. The effects which the installation of the missile base would have on the local population were underlined by comrade Alfredo Bonanno who underlined that the only way to prevent this was by organizing to take direct action against it. Anarchist comrade Pippo Scarso tore up his call up card and made a speech as to why he was refusing to do military service. The meeting concluded with a demonstration from the town centre to the airport, the first to get the direction right, even if only symbolically at this point.

AUGUST 7: On the anniversary of the massacre of Hiroshima, the activities of the international peace camp (debates, round tables, sit-in, etc) culminate in the building of a wall of cardboard boxes in front of the entrance to the Magliocco airport.

SEPTEMBER 1. Demonstration of 200 pacifists and peace happening in front of the airport with prayers and religious rites songs and music.

SEPTEMBER 8. Archbishop Rizzo of Ragusa goes to talk to pacifists at peace camp.

SEPTEMBER 11: In Comiso, in via Conte di Torino, 1, the *Coordinamento delle Leghe Autogestite contro la base missilistica di Comiso* is opened, a technical office and point of reference for the Leagues which are beginning to form in the area.

SEPTEMBER 13: The mafia give signs of having reached the area when a bomb explodes in a sawmill in Vittoria with extortion threats.

SEPTEMBER 14/15: The two remaining tents at the peace camp are slashed as act of provocation by local interests in favour of the base.. The camp is abandoned two days later due to bad weather conditions. Pacifist conscientious objector Turi Vaccari reaches 23rd day of hunger strike against the base. The mayor of Comiso, Catalano, forbids the placing of posters in the piazza Fonte Diana where Turi is fasting.

SEPTEMBER 22. The militarization of Sicilian territory continues with the eviction of 91 peasants and their families from Gangi, a small town in the Palermo region. The reason given for the evictions was that the area is to become a permanent firing range.

SEPTEMBER 27. Turi Vaccaro reaches 35th day of hunger strike with the aim of making the Pope come to Comiso to pronounce himself against the missiles. Pacifists hold regional meeting to discuss future activities. Antimilitarist demonstration announced for Christmas.

The Coordinamento continue their work at capillary level in the area with about 20 open air meetings, talking to the proletarian women in their homes, the students in the schools, the unemployed at the labour exchanges.

SEPTEMBER 28. On reading the leaflet handed out by comrades of the *Coordinamento* one of the schools in Vittoria refused to enter when the bell rang and instead held a spontaneous assembly in one of the town squares to discuss the problem of the missile base. Some of the students formed a League, and two weeks later called all the six secondary schools of Vittoria out on strike and held a huge meeting (over 1,000 present).

OCTOBER. In the early days of October Turi Vaccari stops his hunger strike.

OCTOBER 4. In Castel Di Lucio 2,000 shepherds, peasants and local villagers as well as representatives of the trade unions and parties demonstrate in the rain against the government's intention to turn a part of the area into a firing range.

OCTOBER 8. Two of the three main hotels in Ragusa are completely reserved for two years for NATO use. The imminent arrival of 300 NATO officers is announced. Already numerous residential areas have been rented in block for the next three years at extortionate rents.

OCTOBER 14: Worker at ANIC, Gela petrol refinery, killed due to faulty equipment. Two of the three times that comrades from the *Coordinamento* go to the factory to distribute leaflets re the base and to talk to the workers re forming a League to fight the base which will affect them directly, the management send for police. They were released from custody after pressure from the trade union on the workers' request.

OCTOBER 15. Excavation work for the foundations of the base begins at the Magliocco airport.

OCTOBER 16. In Toronto a truck containing dynamite explodes in front of "Litton Systems Canada Ltd", producers of Cruise missile components, following an anonymous telephone call to the police headquarters. Part of the factory was destroyed by the explosion. 22 Canadian pacifists are awaiting trial for having entered the plant last year without authorization. The NATO criminals plan to locate 572 "Cruise" and "Pershing 2" missiles in western Europe from next year.

OCTOBER 24. Top secret meeting of NATO high officials in Comiso to discuss commercial relations, renting of houses, etc.

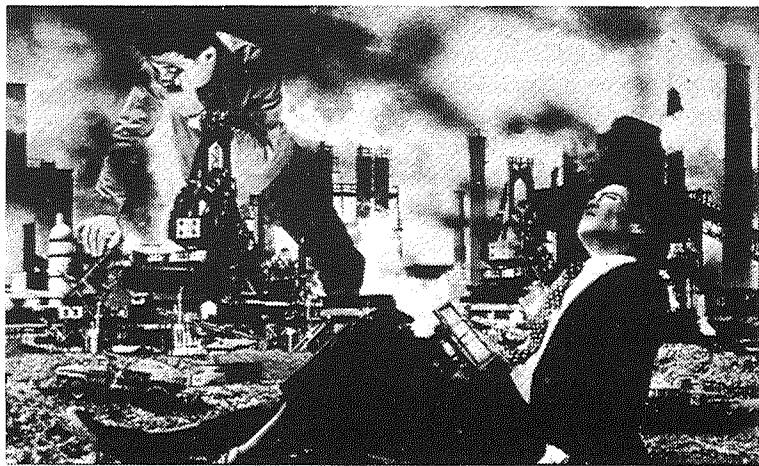
NOVEMBER 4. Germany. USA army lorry carrying Pershing missile colides with a car. The whole population of the village of Waldprechtsweier is evacuated due to fear of explosion during the emptying of the petrol tanks.

NOVEMBER 5. Pacifist sit-in against militarism.

NOVEMBER. Schools in Vittoria come out on strike against the missile base following leaflet calling for immediate assembly by the League of students. The League was formed a few days before following a spontaneous strike by one of the schools on reading the leaflet distributed by the comrades of the *Coordinamento*.

NOVEMBER 11. Military ceremony at Magliocco airport to inaugurate new command of airport under Major Aldo Michelin.

NOVEMBER 6. 30 more apartments under rent contract to NATO authorities. Another 20 are due to be let by the Occhipinti firm. Next week the first significant number of workers employed by the Pizzarotti, Parma, are due to begin work. There are already about 30 employed inside the airport.



the cruise missile base at Comiso can be prevented!

Single issue printed by Ragusa anarchist group and *Rivolta e Libertà* anarchist group, Catania — July, 1982

Why Comiso and Sicily

US imperialism's decision to place Cruise missiles in Comiso, in the centre of Sicily and the Mediterranean, is of an easily comprehensible military and strategic significance. Beyond the pro-American propaganda on a purely military and technical level which explains away this criminal decision as necessary to maintain an equilibrium with the Soviet missiles located on the Eastern frontiers of Europe, there is the fact that the very decision to build the missile base places itself in the optic of "preparing for war to maintain peace", forever the battlecry of States who see in war a solution for the difficulties of domination and the continuation of exploitation.

Why Comiso? The answer is simple. As well as the strictly military ones there are economic and political reasons. Sicily, like Friuli, Campania and Sardinia—other areas chosen for the installation of atomic arms—are underdeveloped situations where three perspectives which are extremely favourable to capitalist dominion are foreseeable: a) intensive militarization of the territory to the point of reaching the closure of vast areas and even their "desertization"; b) organization of the struggle entrusted to the parties of the so-called left, with whom it is always possible to enter into dialogue and reach compromises; c) the great need for work, especially to avoid the prospect of emigration, which constitutes the most powerful blackmail for gaining mass consensus for the construction of the base.

These are the reasons for the choice of Comiso, and therefore also constitute an outline of the difficulties which any revolutionary struggle intending to subvert and defeat imperialism's project of building the base in Comiso will encounter.

The Sicilian reality

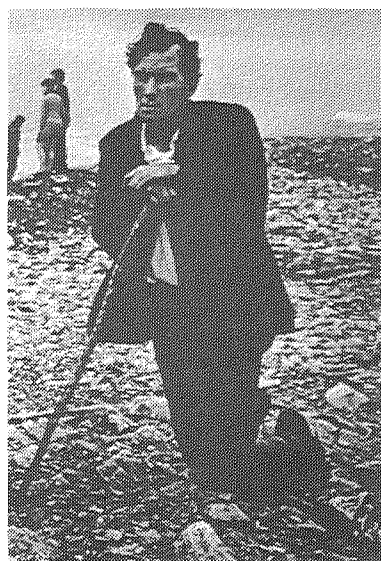
One of the levers of consensus which American imperialism can count on in Sicily is a certain mentality of delegation and fatalism which has inserted itself within the popular strata, especially the land labourers,

and which finds a response in the mafia mentality which directs a power alternative to that of the State and which is often more efficient than the latter.

Local capitalism in Sicily contains a strong mafia content and has relations of patronage both with the intermediate strata and with the poorest of the population. These relationships substantially substitute State power, often seen as something far off and attainable only through the mafia intermediary.

The Municipality, the Province, the Region and the various organisms of assistance are used in an exclusively patronal context, serving to support a capillary and efficient structure of consensus. The bureaucracy has not yet reached the technological levels which characterize it elsewhere but still has the great Bourbon tradition transplanted from Piedmont which renders indispensable the element of mafia power manoeuvres and the connection between the political and economic mafias.

The industrial centres are anomalous, the greater part of the island working class not having an industrial specification but, having foreseen with the shrewdness characteristic of the poor that these installations were essentially capitalist traps, has not lost contact with their original peasant reality and at present find themselves in a situation which is neither working class nor belonging to the strata of peasant or farmhand. The weakness of the struggle from this area is striking.



The land labourers are basically the most combatant proletarian reality because they are linked to very difficult and often minimal situations of survival. The Communist Party, the Socialist Party and even the Christian Democrats are trying to involve the latent dissent of this strata in productive organizations such as cooperatives giving a prospect of continued work and guaranteeing consensus to make it safe for them to approach moments of greater social tension where they will not be able to keep the promises they have made. In the Ragusa area the present situation presents more complex characteristics due to the greenhouse productive sector where alongside the proprietor of a particularly profitable piece of land one finds the figure of the half-day labourer, at the same time wageearner and small proprietor, nominally available for the struggle but substantially tied to the profit perspective, that of small property and therefore of compromises with power capable of guaranteeing or destroying the conditions which make the small peasant greenhouse cultivation productive.

The lumpenproletariat strata fluctuates a great deal. It grows during the phases of increased unemployment in the building industry and when the possibility of work in the industrial sector diminishes. Farmhands and day labourers who are, within certain limits, available for the struggle, also enter this undoubtedly interesting strata. The source of income for the lumpenproletariat of the Ragusa area is extremely varied: from social assistance to sweat labour, from lay off money to work on the land, from microscopic commercial activities (street selling, small transporters, middlemen in improbable real estate affairs, etc), to simply survival. This strata is accustomed to poverty and suffering. In the Ragusa area the tendency towards the organized crime typical of the Palermo and Catania areas is more restricted and this could become a considerable area of absorption when, in the perspective of the realization of the base, the large

mafia organizations intervene massively in the area.

The illusion of wellbeing

The argument of the wellbeing the Americans would bring to the Comiso area has been put forward parallel to that of the slight or inexistent dangers the installation of the base would represent.



This is an argument which always attracts the attention of the exploited. They can understand it because for them the concept of sacrifice—of any kind—is inherent to the concept of work. The State is far away, hence if one wants to obtain anything it is always necessary to refer to local patronage, but when the State approaches to propose a grandiose project, then the old illusions are rekindled.

The poor foster a hope of solving their problem, and the rich know with certainty that, even for only a period, their wealth will increase. The army of those who are neither rich nor poor tries to obtain the maximum utility from the occasion.

In this perspective the affair is proposed by international capitalism, local forces are mobilised by national capitalism who, in agreement with the mafia structures guarantee the functioning of patronage and lay the foundations for its concrete realization. The exploited try to extract all the benefit possible. The blackmail of precarious wages, commercial affairs, increase in sales for shopkeepers, reach insupportable levels.

The consequences of this are very serious: the breaking up of the cultural homogeneity which alone could have guaranteed the progressive development of the struggle and therefore also collective wellbeing; upheaval of the local market (rise in prices of goods of prime necessity, rents, abnormal development in

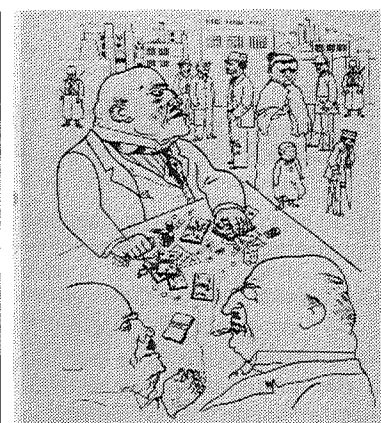
circulation of money and goods); militarisation of the territory which could even go as far as the closure of wide areas and periodical or continued blanket control, to the presence of large contingents of the army and various police forces; impossibility of exploiting even the minimal advantages guaranteed by the same irrational managerial and commercial activity; rationalism of the mafioso patrons on the Palermo model; presence of serious mafia conflicts resulting in hundreds of murders; rise in criminal activity (robberies, extortions, theft, violence of every kind); rationalisation and increase in heavy drug market (in the first place heroin and cocaine); diffusion and mafia control of prostitution.

cannot be attained unless it goes beyond the conditions of present-day capitalism which are often backward. Social conflicts are still acute and can even worsen as a consequence of the need to progressively extend the project of real domination to all parts of the world. The difficulties in the production of social peace are therefore still great. And it is in this direction that the efforts of those struggling against domination must address their efforts, against the State and against Capital. Our class enemy has a vested interest in preparing for the final extinction of any opposition and revolutionary dissent but to do that it must improve the conditions of exploitation which at present cause, among other things, one death

to put a brake on situations which are dangerous for capital and to prevent situations of social conflict being created in perspective. To do this both military (coordination between different armies, new armaments, common exercises, deployment of military contingents), and political means are used.

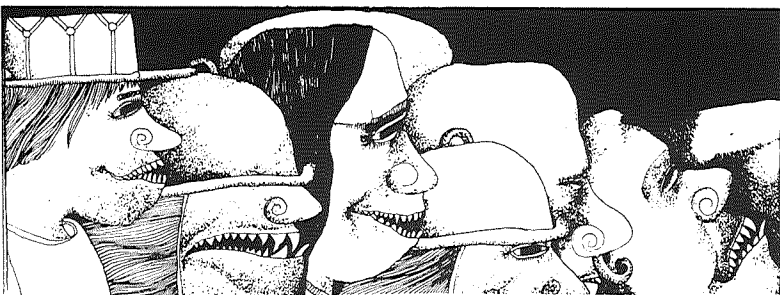
In the political perspective the Christian Democrats are the party which has revealed itself to be incapable of undertaking the task of protecting the interests of international capital. For this reason, in the orbit of government, the Italian Socialist Party has been inserted, and has increasingly become the party of the Americans and the most suitable political force at a technocratic and managerial level for doing what the Christian Democrats—too tied to mafia patronage with a backward mentality—failed to do.

But the essential cover is supplied by the Communist Party. It is this party which takes charge of putting a brake on the rebellious impulse of the exploited, organizing the recuperation of every form of dissent, breaking up the combativity of the land labourers through the formation of cooperatives and other swindles such as parti-



cipation in factory profits, channelling the quite legitimate hopes of those who have never had anything to cause them to lose their conflictual content. We have seen clearly how, in the case of Comiso, the gigantic party machinery has been put into action to develop a formal and platonic dissent through marches, petitions, and hunger strikes, all to prevent a real and effective dissent taking place based on occupation, sabotage, attacks on the bosses' interests, the preparation of the means to prevent the construction of the base.

Another strata which bears a strong responsibility in the project of robbery and death which is being planned for Comiso is that of the shopkeepers. Their miserable interest in increasing



Social peace

The "peace" of the bosses is built on arms, declared and potential conflicts, missile installations, armies, police, military and mafia-type cultures. It is the peace of the graveyard. Along the road of capital's transformation from formal dominion to that of real dominion the contradictions typical of competitive capital are diminishing, leaving the perspective of profit at any cost in favour of increased State intervention in the economic field. This intervention transforms the conditions of economic competition, puts the profit objective into second place, rationalizes exploitation and centralizes domination which is camouflaged by the democratic and representative charade.

The production of value is subordinated to the production of social peace. Consensus becomes the principal industry around which the whole State machinery turns, exclusively directed towards guaranteeing international capitalism exploitation on a planetary level. The local problem passes into second place in the perspective of the equilibrium and projects of the multinationals. Assistance is gradually taking over from the logic of production.

But the solving of capitalism's contradictions, especially at a regional and local level,

every hour and one wounded every five minutes in Italy alone. This improvement will rationalize exploitation and therefore the class struggle will become more complex, but time is needed to put it into effect. In the meantime it will always be necessary for the bosses to oppose each other in the international clash both on the economic and the narrow military level. This tragically leads to nuclear decisions, atomic war decisions, and decisions such as genocide (Lebanon, Afghanistan, San Salvador, etc) which lead back to the problem of the level of the class struggle.

In this way capitalism works towards war while speaking of peace. It builds, sells and uses traditional and atomic arms, but affirms that it does so because there is no other way to safeguard social peace. The exploited have no interest in this "peace" of the bosses.

Those responsible

Limiting ourselves to the construction of the missile base at Comiso it is possible to identify a few basic responsibilities.

International capitalism and its national and local equivalent have an interest in the armed defence of their projects of domination. The NATO, in as far as it is a specific organism created for this defence, is the armed gendarme who intervenes

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CRUISE MISSILE BASE AT COMISO CAN BE PREVENTED!

THE STRUGGLE MUST BEGIN FROM A SELF-MANAGED ORGANIZATION CREATED BY THE FARMHANDS, PEASANTS, WORKERS, HOUSEWIVES, AND STUDENTS THEMSELVES, OUTSIDE THE STRUCTURES OF THE PARTIES AND TRADE UNIONS

The construction of the missile base at Comiso, desired by American interests and supported by local capitalists, can still be blocked by the will and strength of all the workers and exploited.

The bosses' project of death can be stopped if we organize autonomously and struggle also against the blackmail of wages that have been promised to the unemployed if they work for the construction of the base. By attacking the bosses to demand a different kind of work and refusing to work for their project of atomic destruction, various results could be obtained: the secret agreements of the parties and trade unions who with their excuse of providing jobs also support construction of the base, could be denounced; the employers would be obliged to give work in other sectors; and the terrible rise in prices which will follow the arrival of the Americans would be avoided.

The methods of struggle indicated by the Communist Party have shown themselves to be insufficient. The bosses are not intimidated by great marches for peace, the collection of signatures or symbolic hunger strikes. These means do not force them to block the construction of the base. For this reason many of those who participated in these struggles are aware that it is necessary to have recourse to other means—such as, for example, the occupation of the base and sabotage of the interests of the bosses involved in this project of death—means which can be decided and employed only from the direct and immediate will of all the workers and exploited.

An ideal point of reference for deciding what to do today can be found in the Sicilian revolutionary tradition. The great wave of Sicilian socialist leagues at the beginning of the century, the occupation of the land after the second World War, the events of Avola where peasants and farmhands were killed by police bullets: all these struggles, organized autonomously by the base of the workers, impel us to unite in SELF-MANAGED LEAGUES AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MISSILE BASE AT COMISO.

Ragusa anarchist group
"Rivolta e Libertà" anarchist group, Catania

July 23 1982

sales, of seeing dollars circulating instead of the usual few lire, has been exalted as a benefit which would be enjoyed by the collectivity of the whole area, while it is dramatically obvious that their personal and circumscribed interests would be heavily paid for by the poor if not other than by an immediate and considerable rise in prices from rents to goods of primal necessity. There can be no doubt that one of the obstacles to be contended with in the struggle will be precisely the organization of the shopkeepers in the area.

Another category who bears responsibility is that of the small proprietor who conformed immediately to the indications of struggle supplied by the CP, precisely because they are convinced that this strategy does not intend to do anything of any immediate real content. In fact the small proprietors, even those directly damaged by the construction of the base, want to prevent its construction, but this is subordinated to an eventual proposal of an indemnity allowance by the organs responsible. In other words their struggle is linked to an uncertain condition: first they want to see how the State and the Region behave, only then will they really be available to struggle and could go back on this if a proposal by the responsible bodies should become convenient again.

But there is one last category which will bear a great responsibility should it not respond coherently to the proposals of the bearers of death: the category of workers, especially the labourers in the building sector, and even more the great number of unemployed who have deliberately been thrown into the gutter during the past few months in order to create a favourable disposition towards

the base (bringing work and wellbeing!). The swindle is not difficult to understand. The consistency and duration of the work itself is practically minimal, the benefits to be drawn from it will have the same limited duration and soon be reabsorbed by the increase in prices, hence the solution would still be that of remaining unemployed or of leaving to swell emigration. One might just as well impose one's own conditions right away, establishing the terms of the struggle immediately, making it impossible for the bearers of death to continue their blackmail. It is necessary to be very clear on this subject. Struggling immediately and efficiently, two results could be obtained: the construction of the base would be blocked and the bosses and politicians be obliged to find a solution to the problem of unemployment with other initiatives which will be realized more quickly the more effective the struggle against the base.

An organizational proposal

Our intervention in the reality of Comiso and the whole of the Ragusa area—in the towns of Ragusa, Vittoria, Modica, Ispica, Giarratana, Monterosso and the principal villages of the coastal region—which is still in course, can be divided into three phases and culminates with a proposal of self-managed organization.

The first phase has developed and is continuing to develop a direct contact with the different situations through meetings in the town squares and leafletting. The arguments chosen for the meetings and the drawing up of leaflets have been deliberately simplified, avoiding very detailed and complicated analyses in order to centre the argument on one point: the construction of the base can be prevented, on the condition

TO THE STUDENTS

While a new school year is beginning and from all sides you are being invited to study and engage yourselves to attain the instruction which should open up a road for you in life and give you work, the forces of death led by American imperialism and the local bosses and mafia are doing everything to transform your future into a perspective of desolation.

A depot of atomic bombs (Cruise missiles) is about to be installed in the Magliocco airport in Comiso. It is to be the largest missile base in Europe. If it is realized the Americans will have free way—with the excuse of balancing the just as criminal Russian imperialism—to build bases everywhere. And young Sicilians will to their eternal shame have the sad record of having been the first to have accepted this project of death supinely, of not having been capable of doing anything to prevent it.

With the arrival of the army of occupation (15,000 American soldiers are expected) speculations of the mafia will begin on housing, heavy drug pushing and prostitution. Bitter gifts from an invader who well knows the instruments of dominion and exploitation.

AND WHILE THE SCHOOL CLAIMS TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE MAKING YOU STUDY SUBJECTS WHICH OFTEN HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH REALITY, A BAND OF ASSASSINS AND PROFITEERS ARE MAKING THEMSELVES AT HOME. TOMORROW UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY, EMIGRATION AND EXPLOITATION AWAIT YOU, PLUS THE SHAME OF A FOREIGN INVADER IN OUR LAND.

LET US REBEL RIGHT AWAY AGAINST THIS PROJECT OF DEATH!

Let us organize in self-managed leagues of students against the construction of the base. The indications of the Communist Party and the various pacifists are not enough to defeat the Americans' and bosses' projects. Only a self-managed mobilization far from the swindles of the parties and politicians will succeed.

To build a self-managed league of students—to which other workers, unemployed, teachers, peasants, farm workers, etc. can belong—does not require any bureaucratic procedure. The will and common agreement of all those who participate is enough.

THE OBJECTIVES ARE: TO CARRY OUT AN UNINTERRUPTED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BASE AND IMPOSE A HARD, CONCRETE STRUGGLE NOT BASED ON MARCHES, PETITIONS OR GRAND DECLARATIONS WITH NO BITE. THE BOSSES ARE NOT AFRAID OF WORDS, ONLY DEEDS STOP THEM AND CONVINCE THEM TO RECEDE.

Already there exists in Comiso a co-ordinating body of the self-managed leagues against the construction of the base, in via Conte di Torino, 1, tel 966289. This is a technical point of reference where all the initiatives relative to the formation of leagues can turn.

The time has come to fight the monstrous project of death which the Americans and local bosses (their servants) are carrying out in Comiso. Let us unite now in self-managed leagues or it will be too late to stop the homicidal hand of whoever wants to constrain us to live with the prospect of atomic death.

LET US FORM SELF-MANAGED STUDENTS' LEAGUES

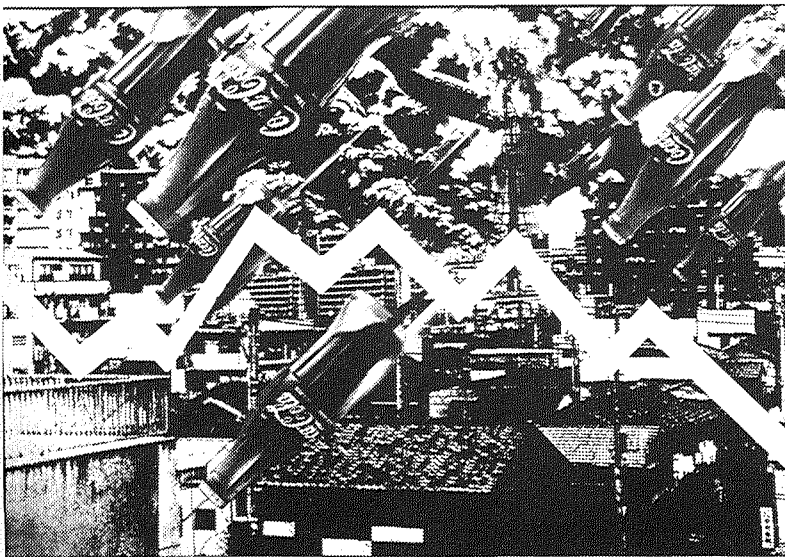
Saturday, October 16 at 5.30pm in Piazza Umberto, the *Coordinamento* will hold a public meeting on the theme: "The League as instrument of struggle against the missile base at Comiso".

Coordinamento leghe autogestite contro la base missilistica di Comiso-via Conte di Torino, 1, Comiso

that the means suitable for doing so are used; the means suggested and put into practice by the Communist Party are not suitable for preventing the construction of the base. This aim will not be reached through colossal but ineffective marches, courageous but isolated hunger strikes or the signing of petitions which will be rendered useless by the swindles of power. Such means are fictitious means which do not really intend to prevent the construction of the base. It is necessary to employ harder and more effective ones. The bosses and their servants understand one language: that of fear. It is necessary therefore to frighten them, as has been done in the past. It is enough to think of the occupation of the land which has

put an end to the injustices of the large landowners. It is therefore necessary to have recourse to the means of occupation, sabotage, hard frontal attack.

The second phase in our intervention is centred on the organization of the international anarchist conference which will take place in Comiso in the municipal sports ground on July 31 and August 1. It will be a fundamental occasion for the anarchist movement, along with the most sensitive area of the proletariat and lumpenproletariat, to go into the problem of the struggle against the base. From this conference should emerge indications of method, analytical indications and more general indications of struggles as the problem of Comiso runs the very great risk of isolation,



American military bases in Sicily

American military bases in Sicily

SIGONELLA. As well as being the main support of the Sixth Fleet, Sigonella is the base which links the NATO forces in the Mediterranean. All the services operating in Sicily are dependent on it. There are almost 50,000 units operating these services in Sicily. It seems that the southern NATO command has been transferred from Bagnoli (Naples) to Sigonella. Sigonella includes three structures:

- an autonomous village for a thousand American soldiers and families;
- an airport, missile ramp and satellite communications plant. This airport permanently houses the Rapid Deployment Squadron; and Operational Bomb Squadron; Patrol Squadron; Antisub Group (P3 Orion Lockheed aeroplanes); a Marine Helicopter Group and a Helicopter Transport Group.

- A nuclear base in the province of Enna. Very little is known about this base. Possibly contains a fairly large nuclear arms depot and an assembly line for pieces or nuclear heads.

The Lockheed P3 Orion which constantly control the whole of the Mediterranean take off from Sigonella. These planes carry anti-submarine apparatus including deep torpedos, missiles and bombs. Hercules F 104 and C130 aircraft also take off from Sigonella, as do the F 14 of the Sixth Fleet. The plane (AB-204) which lost two missiles almost over Catania, also took off from this base. Sigonella is destined to increase in importance generally, especially after the installation of the Cruise missiles as they are easily transportable and could be concentrated largely at Sigonella, to be transported by land not only to Comiso, but over the whole of Sicily.

Other outstanding military installations are:

AUGUSTA. There are missile deployments in the mountain surrounding the bay. The relative work began in 1958. There also exists an underground base for nuclear submarines. To the south of Augusta are powder magazines and a huge military arsenal.

MELILLI. A Marine radio station near the wharfs of the Montedison plant docks. A few indications confirm that near Melilli there exists a tunnel linked under the sea to underground missile depots in the mountain upon which Melilli is built.

CARLENTINI. In the area towards Villasmundo traces of military construction are to be found which could be missile bases.

PORTOPALO. Radar plant for satellite communications.

PORTOPALO-PANTANO LONGARINI. Radar plant and mobile missile station.

POZZALO. Helicopter base and meteorological station near Capo Passero which seems to be camouflaging a land-air missile base.

VITTORIA. The area of the ex-concentration camp of Vittoria (Ragusa) is to become a support structure of the Comiso base.

MARZAMENI. Radar sighting and interception of approaching bombers and missiles.

TRAPANI-BIRGI. The airport has been enlarged to allow for the arrival of the B 52s under NATO direction. At the moment it functions both as goods and passenger landing post and for landing of the F 104 which patrol the canal of Sicily. Like Sigonella, this base is destined to increase in importance.

FAVIGNANA. Telecommunications centre and listening station and electronic interception.

FALCONARA. Radio-bridge between the Spanish bases and the navigation units in the Mediterranean.

NOTO. In the Terra dell'Acqua district restructuring is in course surrounded by the strictest military secret. The work has been going on for four years. Until recently the people of the area were under the impression that a tourist village was being built. It is a radar and missile base. This base is also destined to grow like Sigonella and Trapani-Birgi.

PANTELLERIA. In the Gelkamar area there officially exists a meteorological station. In reality it is the most potent radar station in the Mediterranean. The role of this base is strategically fundamental for anti-submarine defence. On various occasions fishermen's nets in the area have become entangled with navigating submarines. In the Serra Gerlando district of Pantelleria there exists another observatory. There is another radar station on the Montagna Grande, quota 836, with a thirty metre high tower. To be noted that, according to the peace treaty, Pantelleria cannot be used for military exercises. Lately there has been work on the airport and the levelling of the hill of San Elmo: the operation will cost about 20 billion lire.

LAMPEDUSA. Listening station and electronic interception.

SFERRACAVALLA. The mountain, between Palermo and Punta Raisi, is completely dug out. Surveillance is entrusted to the Italian marines. It seems to be an arms depot.

BELVEDERE. District near Syracuse where there is a radar station.

OGNINA. District near Syracuse: possibly an underground base being built.

GELA. Towards Licata, possibly missile base under construction.

TO THE SERVICES WORKERS!

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MISSILE BASE AT COMISO CAN BE PREVENTED!

While our wages are continually being attacked, prices continue to rise

While the government continues with its politic of patronage

While the parties of the left keep quiet or openly support the interests of production and the trade unions have now turned to being the mouthpieces of the exploiters

AT COMISO, A BAND OF ASSASSINS AND MAFIOSI

are building the largest atomic missile base in Europe. The US Cruise missiles are being placed by American imperialist logic and are being situated in Italy by the traitors of the Socialist Party and the mafiosi of the Christian Democracy.

Instead of creating clean, productive work, instead of resolving the very serious problem of unemployment and the rise in prices, we are constrained to emigrate, reduced to silence with the alms of lay off money. In the meantime the bosses are building atomic missile bases to allow criminal American imperialism to make war with the just as criminal Russian imperialism, and so doing are putting our lives in danger.

With the arrival of 15-20,000 Americans the installation of the base will mean total military and police control of the area, whereby any form of dissent or protest (even wage demands) will be strangled at birth. Rents will increase (at the Villaggio dei Gesuiti and Caucana they have already doubled) as well as all essential goods. The mafia are operating to organize the heavy drug traffic, heroin and cocaine (two out of every ten American soldiers use such drugs), prostitution, speculation in the building industry, etc.

These will be the most serious and immediate consequences—as well as the possibility of atomic death—which the Americans will bring as soon as these new conquerors disembark in our land.

The services workers can contribute to stopping this criminal project. To complete the base local bosses and the American army of occupation will require electricity, telephones, water, street cleaning services, etc. It is up to us to decide whether to give them our collaboration or not, whether to render ourselves accomplices to a murderous project, or to obstruct their work by uniting and attacking.

Workers have always been against militarist projects, war, the enrichment of the bosses. They have always had recourse to instruments of resistance and attack in order to obtain decent wages and a happier life.

In the face of the prospect of poverty, unemployment, emigration and death, let us rebel now, right away.

The villages in the Ragusa area are responding to the construction of the base of death by organizing in self-managed Leagues, autonomous organisms thus called according to the traditions of struggle of the Sicilian proletariat.

LET US ORGANIZE RIGHT AWAY IN SELF-MANAGED LEAGUES AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BASE OF DEATH!

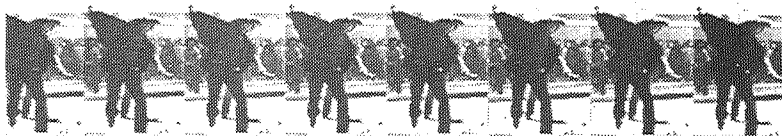
To form a League of workers—to which also other workers, unemployed, students, farm labourers, etc., can belong—does not require any bureaucratic procedure, the will and agreement of all the participants is enough. The principal aims the Leagues give themselves are: uninterrupted and hard struggle, destruction of the base and sabotage of work on the same. Marches, petitions and hunger strikes are not enough. The bosses do not fear such vague and general declarations at all. Only deeds stop them and make them retreat.

Let us unite in Leagues to attack and defeat the monstrous death project which the American assassins and local mafiosi bosses are trying to bring about.

LET US FORM SELF-MANAGED WORKERS' LEAGUES AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MISSILE BASE OF DEATH.

Coordinamento Leghe Autogestite contro la base missilistica di Comiso

October 8 1982



teristics of the conflict, decided by the various localities, leagues which will be able to continue the struggle in first person. In our opinion, and basing this on the results of the first phase of intervention, we are reasonably certain that a strong dissent exists in the various provinces of Ragusa and particularly in Comiso itself among the base of the CP concerning the methods of struggle suggested by this party. Moreover there also exists considerable dissent within the base of the Socialist Party who do not share the positions of Craxi and Lagorio, and this component is very strong especially among the old farm hands. Moreover one can count on a non-political dissent which could, if opportunely sensitized

through a capillary intervention in the periferies of the various towns, draw in the proletarian women in particular. In a struggle such as Comiso the function which this strata could develop should in no way be underestimated.

In conclusion, it appears that our efforts should be directed towards the birth and growth of this organizational structure with self-managed characteristics. The development of the struggle, which we foresee must necessarily address itself towards harder and more acute levels, would then have a solid base which would necessarily and autonomously be capable of operating the class selection which will make the positive result of the revolutionary engagement possible.

i.e. of becoming closed as a specific struggle within a precise area of Sicily and within that kind of struggle which has as its point of reference anti-militarism, the struggle against war and against nuclear power. The passage to the generalization of interventions to other sectors, and therefore the discussion and examination of methods to be used in struggle against the base in Comiso can only be realized through an ana-

lytical and creative contribution of the movement as a whole.

The third phase is predominantly organizational and does not necessarily follow the first two but can develop parallel to them. Our aim is to suggest the creation (and therefore to contribute to creating) self-managed leagues against the Comiso base in the various localities, leagues which will be able to continue the struggle in first person, determining the charac-

Organizational document of the self-managed leagues

Coordinamento delle Leghe autogestite contro la base missilistica di Comiso-via Conte di Torino1 - Comiso tel. 0932/966289

The decision to build a base for 112 American Cruise missiles at Comiso is part of the project of political and military equilibrium between the two great superpowers. The justification given to this deadly enterprise is that it is necessary to counterpose the Russian atomic bases which are lined up against Europe with all possible means.

In fact it is not possible to put a brake on the criminal initiatives of the Soviet Union which as a superpower has betrayed the antimilitarist ideals of the international proletariat through just as criminal initiatives as those of the United States and their European servants. The increase in atomic bases does not defend from attacks from anywhere but constitutes a grave threat for the survival of the whole planet. The struggle must be directed towards preventing new bases (such as the one at Comiso) but also to destroying those already in existence, including the Russian ones and those of all the other States.

Comiso is destined to becoming the largest atomic missile base in Europe and the forerunner of other bases to be built in Spain, Germany, Great Britain and elsewhere. If we do not manage to prevent this criminal project we Sicilians shall be the first to have the responsibility of seeing in our land the largest atomic bomb plant in existence in Europe today.

This sad record will be accompanied by a series of other negative consequences which the arrival of an American army of occupation (15,000 US soldiers are expected) will cause immediately. Rise in prices, circulation of heavy drugs, increase in prostitution, militarisation of the territory, presence in our area of mafioso organizations to sell drugs to the Americans, control prostitution, and speculate on the contracts for work on the base. All this will mean an increase in violence (robberies, kidnappings, thefts) and restriction of individual freedom (controls, road blocks, militarized zones, etc).

The Socialist Party has shown itself to be a true servant of American interests, accepting the imposition of the USA and approving the order to build the base in Sicily through their defence minister Lagorio. The Christian Democrats have set to work right away to control building contracts for the hotels, apartments and restaurants which the Americans will need, and all the contracts for the construction of the base itself, through the mafia.

The Communist Party has given inefficient and discontinuous indications of struggle, showing themselves to be undecided, weak and inefficient. Marches (even composed of 100,000 people), petitions, hunger strikes, impress no one.

The struggle against the construction of the Comiso missile base requires other means and methods.

THE SELF-MANAGED LEAGUE

A) CHARACTERISTICS

- Is an autonomous organization of struggle which gathers all those who really and sincerely intend to prevent the construction of the base.
- Is not a bureaucratic organization. It has no statutes, associative rules, constitutive documents, etc. It can also have no permanent meeting place.
- The individual Leagues spread over the territory are born spontaneously and have as sole point of reference the general principles specified here.
- The League is therefore an organism of struggle which refuses to give permanent delegation to its representatives and so denies a specific professionalism of this representation.
- The League is constantly engaged in the struggle against the construction of the base.
- Each component of the League considers himself to be in struggle against the base and against the interests which want to realize it, recognizing that these interests are those of the exploiters and their servants.
- The League is not an organization of defence of the interests of this or that category of worker. It is therefore not a trade union or parasyn-dical structure.
- The propaganda activity of struggle of each individual League will preferably be co-ordinated with that of the other Leagues, while it remains that it is possible also for independent initiatives with local characteristics, but always with the objective of preventing the construction of the base and respecting the common principles.
- Adhesion to the League is the logical conclusion of whoever shares

neither the ineffective initiatives of those who are looking for a fictitious counterposition.

B) GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Permanent conflictuality

- The struggle against the construction of the base will have positive results only on condition that it be constant, uninterrupted and effective. A desultory, sporadic struggle with occasional interventions will end up a losing battle.

Self-management

The Leagues are self-managed, ie they do not depend on any organization, party, trade union, patronage, etc. They receive no money apart from what comes from spontaneous subscriptions from the adherents to the Leagues themselves. From this autonomy derives their strength.

Attack

- The Leagues refuse the road of mediation, pacification, sacrifice, accomodation, compromise. They support the need for attack against the boss interests which are realizing this criminal project.

C) METHODS

The involvement of the bosses and the American criminals is constant. They take no time off. They mean to realize their project of death within a brief period. Their action spreads against us in a thousand ways: unemployment, increase in prices, intimidation and repression. Tomorrow—should the base be built—this repression will reach the maximum of insupportability and we shall be deprived of even the freedom to think. To constant repression the Leagues reply with *permanent conflictuality*.

- All the work categories have an interest in preventing the base. The least wealthy categories but also those who are a little better off: even the shopkeepers who might imagine that they will cash in something extra on the arrival of the Americans must also take into account the mafia extortion rackets which will be organized to their cost in the area. The same goes for the peasants who are threatened by expropriation and have the right to put their land to really productive use. The other methods which the Leagues employ is therefore the *widening of the struggle front*.

- Counterinformation on the real situation in Comiso is a further method of struggle. Posters, leaflets, newspapers, radio, television, etc, all these instruments must be addressed not only to the inhabitants of the area but also to the whole of Sicily, Italy and the world. Today Comiso and the problem of the base are at the centre of world attention. Through this attention it is possible to defeat the criminals and their servants with our struggle. But the management of information must be autonomous, ie must be *against* the information racket such as the local daily "La Sicilia" and the pennyliners in its service.

- To reach the strata which are excluded from having knowledge of the problem: proletarian women, housewives, children, old people. All of them have the right to know the grave danger that is facing them and it is right that they be able to bring their own contribution to the social struggle which is developing against the construction of the base.

- To accept the equivocations of the chatter, putting off time, the promises made by power, means to give the criminals more time realize their project. We must choose the immediate method of intervention and not put off to infinity what should be done right away.



- We should not forget that to be built the Comiso base requires our acceptance, the acceptance of all those who are working on it, those who allow the passage of materials with which it will be built. It is therefore necessary to widen the field of struggle, also to having the workers of these firms participate, because with their strikes and obstacles they will be able first to delay and secondly eventually prevent the construction of the base.

- The method which the Leagues consider final and adequate to really preventing the construction of the base is its occupation. But this occupation must be a conscious decision made by the Leagues and realized with all the means necessary at the opportune moment. We must reply to the foolhardiness and criminality of the American imperialists and their local servants with great responsibility and just as great decision.

- Each individual League meets as it thinks fit and the way it desires, with the frequency that it considers necessary and in the place it considers best fitted to its structure. Their initiatives are made known to the other Leagues—if this is considered necessary—through the co-ordinating body which, with this aim, draws up a periodical bulletin, where the decisions of the individual Leagues are published.

- Representatives of all the Leagues meet periodically at Comiso for a debate and exchange of views.

- The first duty of every League is intervention directed outwards to quantitatively increase its growth.

- The League is a mass organization, therefore as such can assume the form of sectorial League, (farm labourers' League, peasants' League, shopkeepers' League, students' League, lorrydrivers' League, teachers' League, etc), or the intersectorial form of league (city League, village League, zone League, interzonal League, etc).

The choice of the struggle to be conducted is periodically decided by the individual Leagues from general meetings. The most important decisions are made at the meetings of the representatives of the leagues.

D) PERSPECTIVES

- The Leagues are not corporative organisms. They do not have the perspective of defending the interests of a category, village or social group.

- They are mass structures aimed at preventing the base.

- Any attempt from within or without to channel the Leagues towards electoral objectives, power, patronage, trade unions, simple resistance, etc, must be prevented.

- Developing the various initiatives the Leagues can make their weight felt at the level of mass organisms, imposing the decision not to build the base on the structures of power.

E) THE CO-ORDINATING BODY

- The coordinating body of the selfmanaged Leagues has premises in Comiso, a technical office which serves as a point of reference for all the Leagues which have been constituted and for those in formation.

- The Co-ordinating body is able to give indications on the complexive situation of struggle, the interests which are developing around it, the bosses' objectives, the firms which have been given contracts, the arrival of the American contingents of occupation, the firms which are working to produce materials for the base, and the presence of the Americans in the area.

- It can also supply the instruments for widening the knowledge in Sicily, Italy and abroad on the situation in Comiso.

- It sees to bringing out a periodical bulletin with the various decisions and the various proposals of the individual Leagues, and on their formation and development.

- Organizes periodical meetings of the representatives of the various Leagues, meetings to be held at Comiso.

- It is worked on a rotation basis by the components of the various Leagues therefore is an organism formed and constituted by the League itself which needs to take charge of the costs relative to its functioning (rent, telephone, propaganda material, cost of survival of those in charge).

CONCLUSION

The self-managed League is an organism of struggle to prevent the construction of the missile base at Comiso. It is based on the principle of autonomy of the struggle and permanent conflictuality. The method it chooses is that of attack against the construction of the base and against the interests of those who are realizing it.

The decision to give precise indications of struggle to the Leagues is up to the general meeting of the Leagues' representatives, as well as the establishing of methods and whatever is necessary to prevent the construction of the missile base at Comiso.

NOTES TO COMISO DOSSIER

Introduction

¹ CUDIP: United Committee for Peace and Disarmament in Comiso

² MIR: International Reconciliation Movement

³ FLM: *Federazione Lavoratori Metalmeccanici* (Metallurgists' and Mechanics' Union)

Steps and countersteps of a project of death

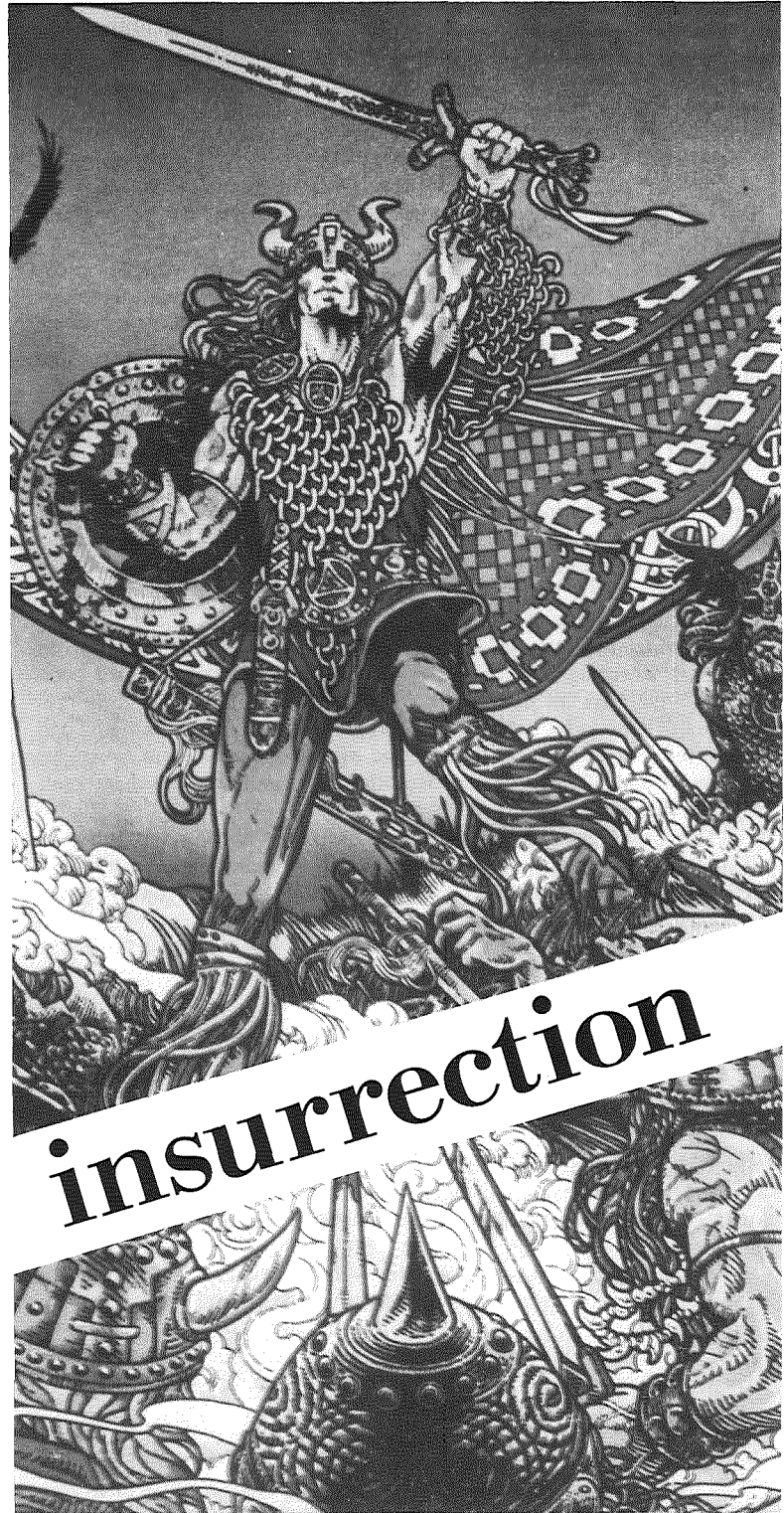
¹ PSI *Partito Socialista Italiana* (Italian Socialist Party)

² PCI *Partito Comunista Italiana* (Italian Communist Party)

³ PR *Partito Radicale* (Radical Party)

⁴ PDUP *Partito di Unità Proletaria* (Proletarian Unity Party)

⁵ CUDIP United Committee for Peace and Disarmament in Comiso



WE ARE ALL CITIZENS OF COMISO!

For up to date information and sending subscriptions, counter information, etc, write to: COORDINAMENTO LEGHE AUTOGESTITE CONTRO LA BASE MISSILISTICA DI COMISO, Via Conte di Torino, 1, Comiso. Tel (0932) 966289.

towards anarchist antimilitarism

IN RECENT MONTHS the theme of war has been present in almost every kind of publication, including anarchist ones. War is approaching, is about to break out, the two great international blocks are turning towards war: we must do everything we can to prevent the world being completely annihilated through a mad impulse of our governors.

But as often happens when we take up a problem which sets off a complex reaction of sentiment and fear in our intimate beings, we have not been capable—or so it seems to me—of going into the problem deeply enough.

In fact, when we prepare to fight an enemy who is threatening us we must ask ourselves what that enemy intends to do so that a maximum amount of information allows us to retaliate, defend ourselves and go to the counter-attack. So, it seems to me, we have not asked ourselves the fundamental question: *what is war?* We have not done so because we all believe, one way or another, that we know perfectly well what war is, therefore are quite capable of doing whatever is necessary to fight those who intend to bring it about.

In reality, though, our ideas are not all that clear. That even the bourgeois press does not have clear ideas on the subject is of little import to us, because it is certainly not from there that we shall find what we need to produce the minimum analysis required to make our actions coherent and meaningful.

Reading most anarchist publications is like reading revised and corrected editions of the progressive bourgeois press, when not some international law review with a few alterations in the language and a little more naivety in outlook.

The vagueness of bourgeois ideas is quite understandable: for the managers of dominion war is the means of guaranteeing its continuation, at least within certain limits. But for those who oppose it, what does war mean?

For the bosses war is nothing other than the accentuated use of the means they have always applied. Armies exist, there are bombs, arms too. Wars have continually been in course and are still breaking out here and there according to a geography and logic which corresponds in some way to the rules of capitalism's development and survival. For the bosses there is no great problem to be solved. They *cannot begin to wage war for the simple reason that they have never stopped waging it*. For those who intend to fight against it on the other hand, things are different, in that their struggle is spread through a series of interventions and



actions valid in relation to their own understanding of the phenomenon of war.

This in turn is determined by their own class interests, their limited knowledge of social and political phenomenon, ideological interpretation of reality and so on and this in a situation such as the present where one is speaking of the possibility (we do not know how near or how far) of a nuclear war capable of destroying everybody and everything in the space of a few seconds.

In theory everyone should be against war, especially the kind which is now possible as we would all be exposed to the prospect of annihilation. How then can it be explained that not everyone is against war? How can it be explained that governments find supporters and executors of their so-called madness? It can be explained through the very simple and fundamental fact of class division. It is obvious that not everybody is frightened by war, or at least not all in the same way. Clearly many, near themselves to the levers of power and closest to padronal exploitation, if not bosses or holders of power themselves, overcome the fear of war through the prospect of the

reinforcement of their own situation of privilege.

Hence the excogitations that these people are producing in their newspapers and programmes cannot fail to reflect the desire to have war considered as something immediate. I am not saying that this is not possible, but that, on the contrary, we should not accept this conclusion ourselves, but through our analyses demystify the swindles in those supplied by the organs of power.

So we come back to the fundamental question: what is war? The publications currently on the market on the subject, as well as our own pages, often end up as mere hangers on or amplifiers of the propaganda of the regime when they say that war is near. It is then stated that, given that war is imminent, we must do everything we can to prevent it, because anarchists have always been against war and because war is a great calamity which strikes everybody, it does not have victors but only victims, and constitutes a great crime against humanity.

Beautiful and profoundly humanitarian arguments which have only one defect: they do not move the State's programmes of genocide an

inch and say nothing new to anyone.

Let us make a hypothesis which corresponds to what has happened in the past and which once infected some of the anarchists of the best intellectual tradition (i.e. Kropotkin and the manifesto of the sixteen). As we have said we are all against war (in words!). Even the most convinced supporters of the virtues of armed solutions to State conflicts *never* have the courage to say so openly, apart from a few delirious maniacs, immediately rebuffed by their more cautious and shrewd collaborators. Those preparing for war are always the most impassioned propagandists of peace. Moreover, they base their peace propaganda on the fact that it is necessary at all costs to do everything possible to save the values of civilization, values which systematically come to be threatened by what is happening in the field of the adversary. (The adversary, in turn, acts and operates in the same way.) We must do everything to prevent war and often people end up convinced that doing everything can even mean going to war in order to avoid a greater catastrophe. At the outbreak of the first "world" war, Kropotkin, Grave, Malato and other illustrious anarchists reached the conclusion that it was necessary to participate in the war in order to defend democracy (in the first place French) under the threat of the central empires (Germany in the first place). This tragic error was possible and always will be possible, because the same mistake was made as is being made today: they did not develop an anarchist analysis, but had faith in an anarchist re-elaboration of the analysis supplied by the intellectuals and divulgators in the service of the bosses. From this it was easy for them to reach the conclusion that, although war was still an immense and terrible tragedy, it was preferable to the more serious damage which could result from the victory of Teutonic militarism. Certainly not all anarchists were blind to the serious deviations of Kropotkin and comrades; Malatesta reacted violently, writing from London, but the damage done caused not inconsiderable consequences in the anarchist movement all over the world.

Today, in the same way, many anarchist comrades do not stop at the impardonable superficialities which can be read in some of our papers and reviews. But let us for a moment go back to the generalizations which abound in our analyses. It is certainly not enough to appeal to universal brotherhood, to humanity, peace, the values of civilization, in order to mobilize the forces which are really disposed to fight the State.

Otherwise why, when dealing with problems relative to the social and economic clash in a specific sense (unemployment, housing, schools, hospitals, etc.) do we avoid resorting to such banalities? Now that we are concerning ourselves with war we are suddenly authorized perhaps to let ourselves fall to the level of the generalizations of the radical humanists?

The fact is that we resort to these commonplaces with fear as the common denominator because we do not know what to do or say, nor what in reality—in the present situation of power in Italy, Europe or the world—the phenomenon of war really is.

Panic stricken by our incapacity, profoundly aware that neither our glorious antimilitarist tradition (with the above exception), or the whole just as glorious baggage of anarchist ideas, can save us, we have recourse to the analytical laboratories of power. And so we transform ourselves into dilettante scholars of international problems. Our journals fill their pages with reflections, comical to say the least, on the relationship between the US and the USSR, between the Nato and the Warsaw pact, between the Middle Eastern countries and Europe; economic problems intersect with military strategies; technical data relative to the A, H, N, bombs find their way into our pages (and heads and have the effect of psychological propaganda. Great confusion results, giving the true measure of how far we are from the reality of the struggle and how much each of our attempts to get closer takes us away from the target. So we become ostentatious. We insist on constructing our analyses with more and more data borrowed from the State produced manuals and we explain to the people with fear as the central point of our argument. We do not realize that in so doing we are becoming functional to that part of the bosses' alignment which plays precisely on fear to obtain two fundamental results: to divert the exploited masses from the increasingly heavy exploitation which awaits them and prepare them, why not, for war. Let us not forget that the best way to push the masses towards acceptance of war is through spreading the fear of war. Tomorrow, with a few adjustments in the regime's propaganda, this fear of total war will easily transform itself into the will and desire to accept a circumscribed war in order to prevent total war, and who knows whether a new Kropotkin will appear (from among the many neo-Kropotkinians who infest our pages) and support the need for the small war in the face of the total one. (After all "small is beautiful").

Of course, we anarchists are against all wars, small or large as they may be, but once we limit ourselves to basing our argument exclusively or fundamentally on fear we place ourselves at the extreme left of capital, supplying it with the opening it needs to attenuate the dissense which is automatically produced within the mass of exploited.

INSUBORDINATION NOW

WE MUST DESERT THE ARMY to unmask its true nature, questioning the State's legitimacy and refusing to become accomplices and instruments of repression and of the choice of death.

The army is one of the clearest manifestations of what is known as the State, instrument of coercion and social violence which represses in the name of the social order desired and supported by the bosses.

The Italian army is an example of this reality. It served for the forced unification of the peninsula under the Savoy monarchy and to control popular insurrections (elimination of banditry, the Milan massacre of 1898). From the beginning it unleashed its repressive nature, forgetting its claimed duty as "defender of the sacred frontiers" and beginning its colonial invasions (Eritrea, Libya) and the interventionist politics of the first World War. After the second World War, the greatest and most atrocious legalized genocide, armies have been used to enforce coups d'états (Greece 1967), to restore "order" (Czechoslovakia, 1968; Poland 1970/82). Today therefore the existence of obligatory military service does not have the aim, as they try to make us believe, of an efficient defence of the "Nation" but maintains a purely political direction. This direction was clarified in the Atlantic Pact, signed in 1949 as the NATO, through which the Americans had occasion to concentrate their strength in Italy and the rest of Europe in defence of the capitalist structures of the member countries of the alliance, leaving the Italian army with the legalized task of repression within the country of any form of class struggle, any revolutionary action by the exploited and any ideology which denies authority as a social system.

The State also imposes consensus of the army and its structure as instrument of repression on the young through the obligation of military service.

Before being called to military service I already had fairly clear ideas as to what the army and its real function within society is, conception which I developed through my anarchist militance. Then, finding myself like thousands of young people every year faced with the hostile reality of life in the barracks, I have chosen to refuse the role of proletarian in uniform, to refuse the obligation of national service.

My act is directed towards underlining my critical attitude towards power and its repressive organizations, by denouncing the homicidal and destructive logic of the military structure and contributing to generalising the practice of desertion as struggle against the army, authoritarian appendix of the State.

In fact, the carabinieri, as branch of the army and the police, as armed structure of the State, are invested in first person with repressive action and used to strike every initiative put into act by the exploited in their attempt to reappropriate what has been taken from them, to heavily dissuade any rebellion against constituted order and to convince the rebels to return to their posts of exploitation in the factories, country and schools. These forces which defend exploitation and render it possible often do not hesitate to assassinate the exploited in the streets and to terrorize with institutional violence: Modena 1950—demonstration against lock-out—6 workers killed by the forces of order. Mussomelo 1954—demonstration because of lack of drinking water—police shoot and kill three women and a man. Reggio Emilia 1960—mass demonstration against the Tambroni government—5 dead. At the same time 4 dead in Palermo and one in Catania. Avola 1968—farm workers demonstrate—police kill two trade unionists. Battipaglia 1969—demonstration for work—police kill two workers. Milan 1970—demonstration one year after the State massacre and the murder of Pinelli—police kill Saverio Santarelli with a tear gas canister.

No less heavy is the use of the military in situations which are difficult to control: Orgosolo 1969—shepherds are chased from the fields by firing manoeuvres; parachutists and carabinieri intervene, the village is encircled and "mopped up". Rome 1969—demonstration of 100,000 engineering workers, the Confindustria headquarters taken over by the military and surrounded by tanks.

I think these few examples will be enough to explain the true function of the Armed Forces.

If I am here today it is to underline the repressive function of the State exercised against all those who—like myself and many other comrades—desert the army and are struggling for a society without exploitation and without privilege.

So long as the State exists laws will exist which defend the dominant classes and their interests.

Orazio Valastro

Anarchist comrade Orazio Valastro deserted from military service in the Italian army at the end of 1981. He was brutally arrested while on the way to make this statement during an antimilitarist meeting in Catania on March 4 1982, and consequently tried and sentenced to five months' imprisonment which he served in Palermo military prison. On his release he was given 24 hours to reach military barracks to take up service where he left off. Not having presented himself he now risks trial again for desertion and to avoid this must remain in exile until the age of forty.

Moreover, once we fully develop our critique of total atomic war and show—thus becoming the mouth-pieces of the extreme left of capital—how terrible the effects of every type and level of atomic bomb are, and once we add, as a simple corollary, that we are not only against atomic war but against every kind of war between States because all war is genocide, an abominable misdeed, a crime against humanity, and so on with similar commonplaces we become extremely contradictory and damaging. In fact, we supply well-founded, scientific and concrete elements against atomic war (because these are supplied by capital itself), but limit ourselves to the usual humanitarian commonplaces as far as non-atomic war is concerned, involuntarily pushing the people (who are rightly repelled by humanitarian commonplaces) to predisposing themselves towards a refusal of atomic war and a probable acceptance of the "small war". And who knows whether it is not precisely this that capital wants of us.

However, because our good faith certainly cannot be doubted, it only remains to go more deeply into the argument and ask ourselves whether we should not develop our anti-war propaganda better.

And here we come back to the initial problem: we do not really know what war is. Because at the moment in which we prepare ourselves to go into the problem we realize that war constitutes but one particular moment in the overall strategy of exploitation put into act by capital.

Let us explain better. For States there exist formal aspects which scan the difference between *state of war* and *state of peace* at the level of international law. It is obvious that this type of differentiation cannot be of any interest to anarchists, who to understand a *real state of war* must certainly not wait for State A, through its diplomacy, to consign a declaration of war to State B. The task of anarchists is principally that of breaking up, as far as possible and for as long as possible, the formal curtain which States draw in front of the eyes of the people in order to exploit them and lead them to the slaughter. To do that, therefore, we cannot wait for the formalities of international law to be worked out, we must be ahead of the times and denounce the *real situation of war* in act even when no officially declared state of war exists.

To tell the truth, the suspicion that it is not possible to establish a net frontier between war and peace exists among the theoreticians of oppression themselves. In his time Clausewitz himself felt obliged to develop an analysis of war as the *continuation of politics with other means*. In the same way, contemporary scholars (Bouthoul, Aron, Sereni, Fornari, etc) have become aware of the problem and have tried to put together the elements which allow an even minimal differentiation between state of war and state of peace. After



In a society divided into classes, essentially constituted of consumer goods, centralization of production and private property, there exists a sophisticated apparatus for gauging and enacting social control. It developed alongside the affirmation of religious and political-economic authority, allowing them to exercise concretely and widen exploitation and domination. This controlling apparatus is modified and adapted to the emancipatory thrusts of the exploited and the projects of the so-called scientists' schemes of exploitation, and in so doing transform themselves from militarization and defence to repressive processes and war. In fact at the present time we are witnessing an increase in military expenditure all over the world and research of the most homicidal projects of annihilation and death, the construction of nuclear missile bases and the continual threat of nuclear war.

Thus Comiso is the Italian pride of the most merciless and ruthless race in the construction of death projects, the strategic and military outpost of the actuation of the repressive process and war mongering of the Italian State and the NATO mercenaries.

We must oppose these projects and the apparatus which realizes them with all possible and practicable instruments. The armed apparatus of the State—the army in all its ramifications—assumes a primary role in protecting and maintaining exploitation, being the armed force which keeps humanity divided into classes, intervening violently to extinguish any attempt at liberation. The history of the proletariat is marked by these events. In 1945 Comiso knew, with its revolt against the war, the brutality the ruthlessness and determination of its nature.

Today as yesterday the army is nothing other than:

THE BOSSES' ARM OF DEFENCE
A FASCIST GYMNASIUM
THE EDEN OF CUT-THROAT GENERALS
THE ELECTRIC SHOCK OF YOUTH
THE SCHOOL OF OBEDIENCE
THE SCHOOL OF BRUTALIZATION
THE LIVING CORPSE OF HUMANITY
A BAND OF ASSASSINS

Each year thousands of young twenty-year-olds find in their hands a blue postcard which "obliges" them to go and serve the "State" in one of its apparatus of death, completely dislocating them from their environment and lives for a year or two, to be trouped in and trained to enslavement, authority, bound in the lowest human condition, the most shabby life in the barracks and the total subservience to the "laws" of exploitation.

Military service is one of the State's arms for building "model citizens" devoid of personality, individuality and of their own way of thinking, against which it is necessary to rebel and refuse.

I am Giuseppe Scarso, ANARCHIST ANTIMILITARIST who, in the name of your military ordinance was to present himself on June 30 at the 225 BTG. "Arezzo" to submit to servitude, enslavement, enclosure in your instruments of death called battalions of the army, REFUSE AND OBJECT to join your ranks.

On June 29 I sent a declaration of TOTAL OBJECTION to the battalion command, the minister of war L. Lagorio and to the supreme head of the FORCES OF DEATH and of EXPLOITATION S. Pertini, stating that I had no intention of becoming a part of their GANG OF ASSASSINS or of donning the UNIFORM of DEATH.

Today I reaffirm my refusal to be a part of the army and of accepting the consequences of my antimilitarist choice.

AGAINST WAR! AGAINST ARMIES! AGAINST ARMAMENTS!
AGAINST STATES! AGAINST PRISONS! AGAINST THE INSTALLATION OF THE MISSILE BASE AT COMISO!
INSUBORDINATION, TOTAL OBJECTION, ANARCHY!

Giuseppe Scarso

Comiso August 1, 1982.

Pippo Scarso, anarchist comrade from Giarratana, Sicily, on receiving his ordinance to present himself at the 225 Battalion F. "Arezzo", replied, in a letter to the Defence Minister, and to the Head of the Armed Forces, S. Pertini (copies sent to all European anarchist papers for publication), "As an anarchist and antimilitarist I do not intend to wear the uniform of blood and death...I believe that the exploited, the revolutionaries, must make known today as yesterday their complete aversion to the military servilism of armies by active insubordination, for a society of free and equal individuals." He read the above statement in the main square of Comiso on August on the occasion of the meeting ending the anarchist conference held there this summer. He concluded his speech by tearing up his call up papers and now faces trial not only for desertion (12 months' sentence), but also for "instigation to commit a crime".

the examination of the elements characterized by armed conflict, the mass phenomena and the tension caused by public opinion—elements not specific to a state of war—these scholars have had to conclude that what characterizes war is its *judicial character* and that this judicial character comes to be atypical compared to the judicial structure which normally regulates belligerent States in "times of peace". In other words war comes to be characterized by the legitimization of murder by a judiciary which in times of "peace" permits neither murder nor massacre.

From this we can clearly see that the criteria that distinguish war from peace are not ones which can be considered valid by anarchists. We are not willing to accept that the *state of war* formally declared by State power is indispensable in order to distinguish, denounce and attack a *real situation of war*. And, on its side, the State well knows that the formal aspect of the "declaration" of war only supplies a simple judicial alibi for a widening of the death process which it normally carries out by the specific character of its very existence. The State is an instrument of exploitation and death, therefore an instrument of war. To say State is to say war. There do not exist States at war and States at peace. States who want war and States who want peace do not exist. All States, by the simple fact of their existence, are instruments of war. To convince ourselves of this and to overcome the objection of whoever accuses us of maximalism or wants to see a difference at all costs where there is nothing but uniformity, it is enough to remember the obvious fact that it will certainly not be the number of deaths, the means used, the field of combat, or the warriors' aims to mark a difference between *state of war* and *state of peace*. To systematically kill a dozen workers each day at the workplace is a phenomenon of war which as far as we are concerned differs only numerically from the deaths which amass in thousands on the battlefield. Behind this profile it is not possible to single out a *real situation of peace* under the capitalist regime, but only the *fictitious state of peace* which in practice is equal to a *real situation of war*.

We therefore establish that war is a State activity which does not characterize a transitory and circumscribed period of its action but has

been the very essence of its structure for as long as we know during the whole course of exploitation. So the social-democratic illusions of unilateral disarmament, respectable pacifism and bourgeois non-violence collapse. Whoever supports pacifist theories and uses them to prevent the State from waging war is substantially a warrior himself, a reactionary who supports the State's continual state of war, preferring it to another state of war which is considered different but which is substantially the same, being in practice no more than an extension of the conflict already in act.

This explains how the parties in government and those who have betrayed the workers' ideals or who nurture the humanitarian whims of the radical bourgeoisie can, with great impudence or through stupid ignorance of reality, make great speeches against war. In practice, theirs are the speeches which guarantee the constitution of *real war*, preparing the masses for the acceptance of a future (always possible) extension of the small war in order to avoid a larger one which is postponed to infinity while the objective state of conflict is maintained and developed.

These concepts should be—and basically they are—more or less accepted by all anarchists. But, as it seems from many articles published over the past few months in our press, it is too easy when on the subject of war to slip into a dimension which sees it as something which can be avoided or which alone can be considered a form of struggle capable of coalizing the revolutionary forces.

It has been said that suddenly, out of the blue, we have come to find ourselves faced with the danger of world conflict far greater than could have been imagined in the past. It has been said that we must do something right away to prevent the world war that is approaching, against the increase in atomic arms by both the US and the USSR. It has been said that there are moments in the life of a people or a continent where social, economic and political problems come to be superior to far more pressing and superior needs, referring to absolute categories such as survival, frontist opposition and raving homicidal hegemony, etc...

It is all very well to fight against war, militarism, bombs, armies, generals, missile bases. But if the reason is



torture in Italy

that it is the only level of intervention that the anarchist movement possesses, and that all other interventions are impossible, we must ask ourselves what is happening. It is not enough to throw oneself headlong into the only activity that remains open to us because we have difficulty in other sectors. We should ask ourselves whether the acceptance of the theme of war and the inability to place this theme within the specific logic of the State is not perhaps a consequence of our incapacity to address ourselves towards the real struggles in act? And whether in burying our heads in the sands of our weakness and facing the problem of the struggle against war without a minimum of militant structure, we are not running the risk of becoming the fanciful carriers of a maximalist ideology which ends up being convenient to the State?

These questions may not be shared by many comrades, but they remain before us as so many points which require going into and discussing. It is not enough to deny them and shrug our shoulders and carry on.

In our opinion it is necessary to go into the general conditions of the class conflict today and re-examine the function which anarchists can develop within the conflict itself, either as a specific movement or as an organizational force capable of expressing itself within the general movement of the exploited. It is urgent that we single out our weaknesses immediately and without half measures, without the persistence of our old paranoias, the stagnant ideologizing which pollutes many sectors of our movement, the social democratic infiltration, respectability, hesitation in the face of action, the craze of *a priori* judgments and ecclesiastical closure, the aristocratic residual which made us consider ourselves the monotonous carriers of truth.

To analyze to the extreme consequences our effective possibility of struggle does not at all mean to take a distance from the problem of war, and we shall be able to give a far more precise and meaningful response, a far more detailed indication and project of intervention, than what is happening at the present time which sees us only as suppliers of rehearsed theories of the bourgeoisie and vulgar distributors of a humanitarian maximalism which can be shared by all and precisely for this reason no one is disposed to supporting.

Moreover, in addressing our efforts towards the reorganization of the movement and the realization of what is necessary to overcome this reflux, we shall avoid limiting our discourse simply to that of fear of war, which by its vagueness and generality constantly runs the risk of falling into interclassism.

We should not forget that our evaluations of a problem—and war is no exception—often depend on the objective conditions in which we find ourselves personally and of those of the movement in general.

THE ITALIAN STATE, like all the other advanced capitalist States planning the road to total control behind a façade of “democracy” has over the past years encountered wide strata of active dissent from its project. This led to an acceleration and rationalization of its war techniques against the rebelling classes: special prisons; judicial innovations such as those rendering possible 12 years’ remand prison while on charges related to armed struggle; construction of “repentant” militants of the armed parties.

Party to this plan and in many cases leading the show have been the Communist Party and trade union, totally abandoning even a shadow of their past claimed roles as organs of class struggle, their voices raised above all others in the democratic choir screeching out against “terrorism” and inciting workers to spy on and denounce each other in the work place. These contenders for a prime place in the new smooth democratic fascism of the future have once again donned their chameleon’s clothing now that they find their hands soiled with the blood of the institutionalized torture of arrested revolutionaries and sympathizers. Their pages are soaked with crocodile tears, crying out scandalized against the use of techniques worthy of the Inquisition and the most retrograde South American dictatorships. Much of the bourgeois press in Italy and elsewhere have also taken given space to this barbaric deviation from “civilisation”.

It is not in this vein of “democratic indignation” that we present the following reports. The use of violence and torture by the State’s repressive forces is nothing new, as well the proletarians, the young emarginated “questioned” for theft, robbery and other manifestations of their non-integration, or simply because they are black, or Irish or gypsies, etc. Nor is it a prerogative of the Italian State as the number of deaths of proletarians in police custody in Britain show. This kind of treatment is so frequent that it comes to be considered normal by many who undergo it systematically.

When the State extends such fascist methods to comrades of the revolutionary movement as it has done in Italy since the Dozier kidnapping, it does it as a calculated move and a sign of a change in the balance of strength in the face of the revolutionary movement. The investments in special prisons and repressive technology; the early morning raids; the “blitz” operations and mass arrests have come near to attaining the aims of the State offensive: of eliminating all real dissent and isolating the revolutionary movement, no longer able to respond correctly to violation of its militants.

This weakening and disgregation however would have been impossible to realize if left to the repressive organs of the State alone. One of the prime causes, and one could say the deepest and most far reaching one has been the lacerations within the movement itself: the accusations, the suspicion, the denouncing of all extra-legal by those who, seeing their armchairs threatened, substantially became collaborators of

the State hangmen.

The struggle against torture is therefore to be carried forward at all levels. Certainly we must denounce the State inquisitors with strong voice and respond fittingly to their misdeeds. This however does not go to the roots of torture which can only be reached through deepening the revolutionary struggle and obstinately continuing to clarify the means for doing so.



WITNESS ACCOUNTS FROM DOSSIER ON TORTURE IN ITALY

STEFANO PETRELLA and ENNIO DI ROCCO: report by lawyers Di Giovanni and Lombardi of 12.1.82.

“...They accuse police of having kept them hooded from the evening of their arrest till the time of interrogation as was witnessed by journalists themselves who were parked by the police headquarters... Their hands were chained tightly behind their backs, Petrella was lifted up from the ground by the handcuffs, they were beaten about the face, head, head banged against the wall, beatings on the legs, knees, the tibia, soles of the feet with batons. They were punched in the stomach, and neck and shoulder muscles were wrenched, all the time being threatened with death. ... “In any case we can do what we like because we are in a situation of illegality”. Still hooded, Petrella was attached by the arms and legs to a rigid surface, head hanging down backwards, his nose was blocked and salt water poured into his mouth”. ... He was beaten on the ankles, the back and the soles of the feet and given an injection in the right arm.

GIANFRANCO FORNONI, February 1982

Was captured in Tuscany 23.1.82.

“The undersigned, hands handcuffed behind the back, was thrown to the ground and dragged for about 50 yards amidst thorns and brambles... after this he was kicked and punched in the face and on the body and a pistol shot was fired almost touching his skin. He was then hooded (and remained so until 25.1.82) and thrown into a car face downwards, with hands chained tightly behind his back... on reaching the entrance to a building he was raised to the third floor by a rope tied under his arms. Up one flight of stairs inside the building he was taken into a room, stripped naked and left so, hooded and handcuffed on his knees for about three quarters of an hour. He was beaten for about 5-6 hours, sometimes made to stand, sometimes to sit, kicked in the abdomen... During this phase the undersigned was lowered from a window by a rope tied under his arms... the treatment continued the following Sunday, with the addition of splinters being pushed under his toenails and the intervention of a police officer with a pronounced Roman accent squeezing his testicles with spring pliers, threatening to castrate him, while a Sardinian officer pulled hairs out from his pubis and penis.

torture and silence

The use of torture is based on the indifference of all

Even if torture is no longer being talked about in Italy it continues to be the order of the day in the police stations and prisons.

The respectability of the so-called left has put its mind at rest since the scandal of the arrested police officers for torturing revolutionary comrades fallen into their hands. The parliamentary interrogations and newspaper articles over, everything has returned to normal. But the normality of the State is based precisely on the use of torture in the silence and indifference of all.

The comrades in prison who intend to maintain their revolutionary identity are made to undergo special norms of isolation provided for by article 90 which is psychological torture of the worst kind: no exercise period, no letters, no personal objects, reduced food. The road towards the French penal colonies is now open. ancient Cayenne relives among us in a modernized version.

Proletarians who fall into the

hands of the police are systematically beaten up. This method, typical of fascism, in the deranged fantasy of our police poses a pedagogic value: whoever undergoes it, even if innocent, remembers it and therefore remains on their best behaviour in future. This Inquisition mentality is practically ineliminable within the police, no matter how much chatter goes on about their democratisation.

To keep silent means to open the way towards an increased use of torture. Today salt water (mixed with sand and castor oil) is forced down revolutionary comrades and proletarians arrested arms in hand. Tomorrow similar treatment could be applied even for handing out a leaflet, printing a newspaper, coming out on strike.

To keep silent means to give space to a wide range of "white" torture. The doctor who killed Serantini in prison (see p.19) by denying him medical attention was a torturer in the same way as the policeman who beat up our same comrade on the banks of the Arno.

Torturers are all those (magis-

Other forms of treatment undergone include: being hit on the head with a pistol butt, compression of bleeding wounds, burning of genitals with cigarettes, kicks and punches on the face and body..." The treatment lasted until Monday 25.1.82 when Fornoni was finally transferred to the prison of San Gimignano.

CESARE DI LENARDO

Once Dozier was freed the five *brigatisti* were made to strip and were taken away hooded, not before having been kicked and punched.

Di Lenardo was hit by a pistol butt. Ciucci was taken to police barracks after precursory medication in hospital. He was made to lie on the ground face downwards and his newly stitched wounds were walked on by jackboots. Di Lenardo says that for four days he underwent uninterrupted illtreatment and beatings. His ankles, knees, wrists were wrenched and for this reason he still has difficulty in standing and has two broken ribs.

He was beaten, laid out flat on a table, head downwards, and was forced to drink salt water. He tells of electric shocks in the lower abdomen, cuts on the calves where salt water was poured on to the open wounds.

Di Lenardo has several burns in various parts of the body caused by a chemical substance. He has a ruptured ear drum which bled for three days.

He denounces having been transported by night into the country in a lorry, tied to a tree, and to have been submitted to a feint execution, being made to pull the trigger of an empty pistol against his temple.

LOREDANA GRESTITI

The DIGOS came and took her away into a kind of lock-up under the police headquarters, throwing her downstairs. She was tortured semi-naked until three in the morning.

Beatings, punches and flogging of the soles of the feet. Then they took her away bleeding to Camerino prison where she was held in isolation for 12 days for her wounds to heal before she was seen by the magistrate. She denounced the torture she had undergone to the judge, but her lawyer Valori (Communist Party) advised her not to go ahead with the accusation

because it would damage her line of defence and make her run the risk of a counter-accusation for defamation...She has not menstruated since the day of her arrest and has had to be taken to hospital.

PAOLA MATURI

After her arrest on February 1, some hooded men came into room on the 3rd. "They tied me up, blindfold and hooded me and drove me off in a van with two men (at least I think so by their voices). They told me I was in a state of illegality, in a word I was kidnapped.

They took off my upper clothing and began to punch me in the stomach and on the thighs, then started to feel my body and pull my nipples. After twenty minutes or half an hour they took me to one of their flats.

There I was completely stripped, still tied and blindfold and hooded, and they began to beat me about the body.

What made me go mad with pain was hot liquid being injected into the vagina and anus, accompanied by kicking. Still in the vagina, pinching like electric shocks. Beatings on the spine and back of the neck.

The most painful thing was when they flew into a rage, pulling and crushing my nipples so much that the following days they threw out pus in continuation. All this accompanied by shouting and threats.

Preventing me from breathing, they forced me to smoke an unknown substance with a strange taste. I felt my head go empty and when I came to again I was sitting on a chair and had urinated".

ANNA RITA MARINO

Repeatedly beaten and slapped she was chained to a radiator all night and the following morning. Then transferred to Ostia police barracks she was locked in an underground cell one metre by two. Some hours later she was taken away by four men, blindfolded and driven into the country. Anna Rita thinks it was the pine wood of Ostia because she remembers the smell of the trees. Stripped naked, she was hit in the stomach, face and legs with an instrument she couldn't define. Her nipples were twisted while one of her torturers shouted obsessively, "Talk, you are Adriana, you whore."



CARABINIERI TERRORISTS AND FLANKERS OF THE FASCISTS.

Three high-ranking officers of the Carabinieri have been charged for having collaborated with fascist terrorist groups in Lazio: Major Vecchioni, commander of Group Rome II; Lieutenant Colonel Pappa and ex-Captain Pappa and ex-Captain Sandro Spagnoli.

CARABINIERI AND POLICE TORTURERS OF ARRESTED COMRADES in Veneto, Tuscany and Lazio. Apart from the normal beatings, the comrades Di Rocco, Fornoni, Bellotto, Ciucci, Fracella, Petrella, Sudati, Lanza, Mantovani, Vezza and others have undergone brutal police methods such as pins under the nails, cigarettes extinguished on the penis and in wounds, testicles crushed, violent jets of icy water, forced ingestion of salt water, electric shock, injections of hallucinogenic substances and Pentothal (truth serum).

CARABINIERI PROVOCATEURS. They presented themselves at our rooms in via Gesuiti 28, Saturday February 20 with a search warrant signed by vice-procurator Siscaro with the unfounded pretext of looking for "narcotic substances". Their precise objective was on the contrary to intimidate us and seize the remainder of the leaflets which we had distributed the days previously announcing the opening of our premises and denouncing the serious climate of repression in Italy culminating in the torture cited above.

To cry scandal is useless, as is the legalist disdain of the Radicals, Lotta Continua, PDUP, and co. who are calling for the democratic use of police and carabinieri. The blame for the torture, provocation and the fascist plots of the carabinieri also lies with the crows and vultures (Communist Party in the lead followed by its various tailors) who have incited the police forces against the whole revolutionary movement.

The anarchists, while reaffirming the diversity of their struggle which is directed towards the destruction of all power, from that of the Armed Party which is directed towards the construction of a new one, denounce the police and carabinieri and also denounce all the politicians and servants of the bosses as being those really responsible for torture.

Against torture, exploitation, repression, the anarchists propose to struggle to build a vast revolutionary movement and real opposition capable of giving a full response (counter-information, documentation, meetings, interventions in the factories, schools, living areas and wherever clarification on the class struggle is possible).

To realize this objective the anarchists propose that the exploited organize in a libertarian and self-managed way, refusing any kind of delegate whatsoever, using direct action in the struggle against all forms of bureaucratic, hierarchical or vertical organization which although it often presents itself as revolutionary, contains the seeds of oppression and power.

Rivolta e Libertà anarchist group

This leaflet was handed out at all the major schools in Catania in February 1982. Comrades Salvo Marletta and Melina Di Marca were held for questioning and have since been charged with: defamation and insulting the police and circulating false information. In June five police officers were arrested in Genova, Padova and Rome accused of kidnapping, illtreatment and grievous bodily harm concerning the Red Brigades militants arrested after the Dozier kidnapping. Police all over the country protested and they were all released after a brief period in hospital.

trates, police, prison guards, journalists, doctors, lawyers, etc) who use methods of pressure (physical, psychis, direct and indirect) to obtain a modification in behaviour from a prisoner. At the present stage of the class conflict there still exist precise legal norms which limit detention to the privation of freedom and do not prescribe or make possible recourse to additional means with the aim of making prisoners act against their will.

This concept is important and is not based on simple guarantees, but comes from the essential point of freedom of movement which we still possess and which we should use.

We must denounce all the behaviour of authority—and in the first place that of the police—which reduces this freedom of movement.

This struggle is not only directed towards “prisoners’ defence”, but assumes a wider meaning: it means to defend all those who find themselves facing a situation of exploitation in the workplace, the housing estates, at school. Torture, therefore, also becomes precarious work, unemployment, life in the ghettos and poverty, lack of hygiene, lack of roads, water, means of transport at low cost, culture, free books, etc.

In struggling against the police torturers we are beginning a battle which can only conclude with the generalized struggle against all forms of exploitation which are, in practice, so many different ways of torturing the proletarians and exploited.

systematic torture

The problem of the silence surrounding the torture which is systematically applied to arrested proletarians is undoubtedly more serious and far wider than the turn to differentiated treatment enacted against the comrades accused of “terrorism”. It is a more serious problem because it does not reach higher levels of information and comes to be considered normal procedure by the so-called public conscience. Moreover, the arrested proletarians themselves consider the treatment they undergo “normal” and do everything possible to reduce the period of “treatment” and damage to a minimum.

The first golden rule for them is never to declare that they have been tortured, especially to the judge, because in any case no good becomes of it and future doses of beatings increase. Second rule: when one is caught and taken to the police station, try with every possible means to throw oneself on to a piece of glass or cut the face with any object that comes to hand whatsoever to give oneself obvious wounds and so oblige the inquisitors to take them to hospital immediately. Third rule: pretend to collaborate, come to an agreement, etc. It is a code of survival which ends up entering the same logic of inquisitor and arrested, a code of violence and tyranny.

It is not easy to defeat this mentality. The very attention which is turned towards the tortured com-

“repentance” and torture

THE SPECIAL law regarding “repentant” ex militants of various armed organizations is typical of the agreements between different power structures which are normal for the State and its executive organs.

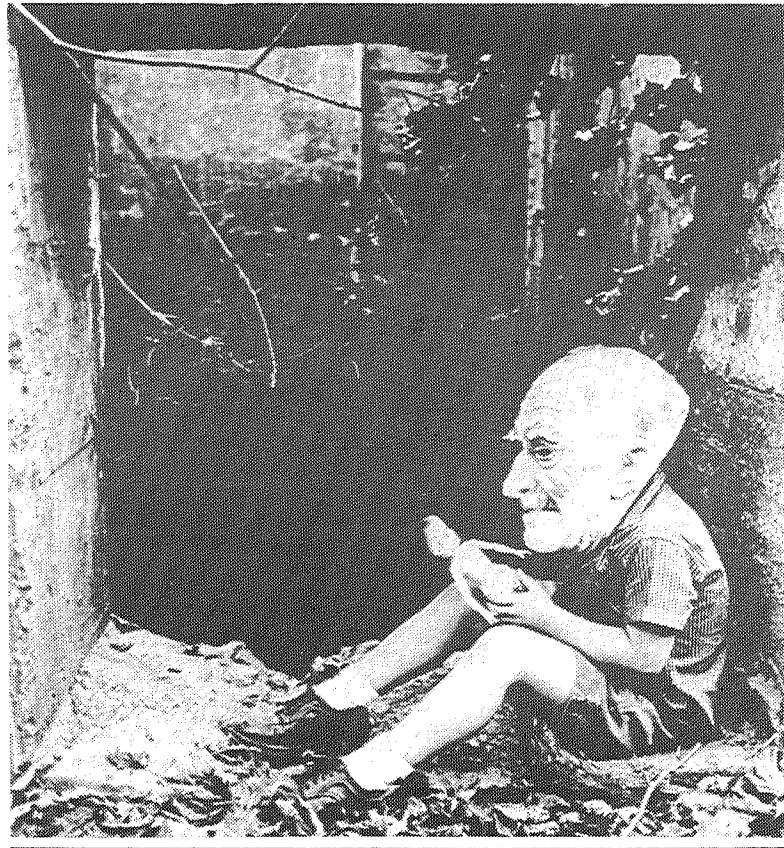
This law and the by no means marginal acceptance of it among the members of some of the armed organizations indicates the failure of something. Not of “armed struggle” which, as a method, can neither fail nor be successful, but of some political projects which took it up as privileged vehicle of intervention in the class conflict.

The government and parliament have deliberately reduced legislative norms to allow a kind of negotiated solution to a problem which on a strictly military level could have gone on too long and remain significant even over the next few years when a growth in generalized conflictuality is expected due to the worsening of the crisis, the difficulties in restructuring, dislevels in production, etc.

The various points, the “reduced

sentences”, “non-punishability”, “release from prison by government initiative” for the supercollaborators, freedom while awaiting trial for those who give themselves up “spontaneously”, etc have two different perspectives: on the one side the informers, ie those who actively participate in the accusation and massacre of their own ex comrades of struggle and who thus put themselves in the service of the torturers, police, magistrates, the most abject worms in the zoological scale, and on the other hand those who “call themselves out”, ie who declare the failure of their own political activity and want to go backwards, thus throwing a shadow of blame on to the comrades who do not intend to “reverse” and so they also indirectly turn out to be spies.

Within this repartition there exist various shades and subtleties of secondary importance: what counts is that all of them, in one way or another, to a greater or lesser extent, are responsible for the torture, the executions, the sentences and inti-



rades and great discussions about it does nothing other than dig an even deeper furrow of differentiation. It is necessary to do everything to document and denounce the systematic torture concerning proletarians in custody to recompose a field of struggle which risks being compromised. It is possible to intervene in the proletarian quarters, the people who listen to us know perfectly well what we are talking about and it is a way to carry the problem of prison outside into reality in places where evryday problems are faced.

In this way it is also possible

to talk of the phenomenon of torture without that air of astonishment and indignation which is quite out of place. The State uses torture “as a rule” and not as “exception”. It must therefore be unmasked in its everyday actuation and not in the particular of a moment of tension. In this way the hypocritical mask of all those respectables who are ready to put a hand in cold water when it is a question of political prisoners, but do not want to do anything for the proletarian prisoners tortured daily can be made to fall.

midations which the comrades undergo in prison, and which all the other comrades are obliged to face when they actively involve themselves in the class conflict.

Each one chooses their own road. The future will not fail to present these worms with the account for their misdeeds, demanding the balance. For the moment a maximal consideration can be made. The participation of all these people (for some time inappropriately referred to as comrades) in the class conflict has been impulsive and incomplete, based on romantic or banditesque illusions, absolutely unsuitable to be the basis of the revolutionary problem. Their very “recruiting” was a mad acritical phenomenon, a kind of mad race towards the quantitative, without taking into account the growth of individual and collective consciousness. This is the price for the illusions of the revolutionary party, from that of mediator between leading minority and proletariat, and minority carrier of the revolutionary memory.

It is necessary to be deeply aware of this problem in future, and above all of the fact that no technical or organizational efficiency can ever take the place of the progressive and harmonious development of the consciousness of the revolutionary subject.



SEAGULLS' STATUTE

Art.1-Seagulls are born to fly free. It is the love and the joy of living that determines their subversive being.

Art.2-They teach other birds to fly through their behaviour, without the presumption of being the vanguard of who knows what.

Art.3-They seek and they find on the basis of common affinity and do not accept rules beyond their own passions, their own desires and their own pleasure of living and flying together.

They unite in little flights of affinity on this basis, federated among themselves to live and fly together and struggle against everything that humiliates the sense of life and freedom.

Art.4-Seagulls put mutual aid into practice and therefore engage themselves in opening and breaking the cages where seagulls and birds are locked up.

Art.5-With this article the preceding four are annulled as well as any future articles, because seagulls do not recognize either statutes or laws, or regulations, or programmed forms of existence, beyond their pleasure in flying free.

Anything which is pre-established or programmed only limits and humiliates life.

document

Azione Rivoluzionaria

The following documents drawn up by the ex armed organization Azione Rivoluzionaria begin from 1976. Most of them are born from the need to claim responsibility for the various actions carried out against men and organisms of power, which although they had a function of clarification in the immediate sense, directed to the public at large, also contain very interesting revolutionary analyses. The class analyses, the function of the armed organization, the objectives, the relationship with work at mass level are all elements which show the difference between Azione Rivoluzionaria and the other Italian armed organizations., although important contradictions with the general principles of anarchism and the autonomous practice of struggle which was also taking place over these years emerge. For reasons of space we have omitted the two long theoretical documents which we shall publish in some future issue along with parts of the debate which they created in the anarchist movement in Italy.

BOMBING OF PAOLINE EDITIONS MAIN OFFICES

With the attack on the main offices of Paoline Editions, representatives of the cultural wing of the Vatican linked to the CIA and the American multinationals, the revolutionary feminist and proletarian forces have struck one of the centres of their millenarian oppression.

The generalized attack against the proletariat by the capitalist forces has also expressed itself through a return to ultrarepressive moralism propagated in the texts published by Paoline Editions.

As well as the successful parliamentary clerical-fascist manoeuvre of confirming abortion as a crime and thereby incrementing clandestine abortions with which the barons of bourgeois and anti-feminist medicine are making a real affair at the cost of thousands and thousands of women, the feminist revolutionary forces are replying with the propaganda and support of armed struggle for their liberation.

COMMUNIQUE OF THE A.R.A.F. (Azione Rivoluzionaria Autonomia Femminista)

Free abortion is a political objective which the female popular masses have inserted in the ambit of a far wider revolutionary aim: the liberation of the popular masses.

The condition of total subordination women are subjected to is a fruit of a society in which essential structural values are power and profit in the fullest sense of the term. Sexist discrimination is racial and classist discrimination and this in turn acts on the popular masses in a comprehensive and total way. Women, blacks, prostitutes, homosexuals, proletarians, and prisoners are our political allies.

The parliamentary norm which regulates abortion is a squalid spectacle by the boss and social-reformist clique who act through the legalitarian parties.

..... The DC-PSI-MSI (Christian Democrats, Socialists, Fascists) alliance should be seen in this optic, aimed at denying the political, psychological and physical self-determination of women. The depersonalisation operated by the profit system and power structures have now reached nazi level: women, the popular masses, have been robbed of the ultimate, inalienable property: their bodies.

TO THE ATTACK, FOR THE GROWTH OF FEMINIST AUTONOMY

3 February 1977, La Spezia, around 22.50 a bomb explodes in a Luisa Spagnoli dress shop in Piazza Cavour.

COMMUNIQUE RELATIVE TO THE ACTION IN LA SPEZIA

"We have closed a den which rakes in its profits from the sweat of the imprisoned proletariat".

COMRADES NEVER FORGET!

5 May 1972 - 31 March 1977

Five years ago in Pisa anarchist comrade Franco Serantini was murdered. It was the first result of the elections in course in the country and the confirmation that the Christian Democrat regime had decided to maintain power and defend the interests of the bosses, shooting whoever intended to oppose them. Since the deaths of Avola and Battipaglia in 1969, there has been a whole succession of assassinations and State massacres in response to the workers' need for communism and freedom. In the past seven years a great revolutionary potential has been born, which, starting from real needs, is tired of compromise and has accused not only the bosses and the State but also the traditional Left which in its deeds has shown itself to be a mediator of class conflict functional to the survival and growth of the capitalist system. The comrades have understood that antifascism is carried out in the streets and not in the anniversary parades; that the class struggle cannot be exercised in negotiations between bosses and legal structures such as the Factory Council, but in the department meetings; that what counts is not political transformism but economic revolutions; that popular justice cannot and never will be able to express and exercise itself through codes and tribunals but with direct action; that the State and the bosses defend their class interests with arms in hand and therefore it is necessary to give oneself similar structures and impose our revolutionary programme; that the most coherent way to celebrate the dead of May 1 1887, like May 5 1972, would be that of making those responsible pay, transforming a day of mourning and whimpering into a day of celebration, one of authentic revolutionary joy. This May 5 1977 will remain a fundamental date for the revolutionary movement, because its vanguard has been able to give a precise indication of struggle.

The action carried out by the comrades who struck Mammoli is not an episode of stupid revenge as some journalists have tried to make out, but is full of political significance. Mammoli could have saved Franco after the police beating and did not do so based on a cynical political calculation, a precise class choice, reconfirming once again in this case his behaviour on many other occasions towards imprisoned comrades (in the prisons there was great rejoicing when the news that he had been struck reached them). Mammoli is not only the doctor who through negligence left Franco agonizing for 32 hours while drop after drop his blood filled his cranial cavities until it crushed his brain; Mammoli is a symbol, an institution, a link in the prison system and his behaviour "does not differ from that of other doctors in Italian prisons" who file away the death of a comrade with a few words.

May 5 1972 - 8pm

PISA - Franco Serantini, born in Cagliari July 16 1951, is lynched by 10 police officers under orders of Captain Albini. He is arrested by Commissaire Pironomonte and Captain Albini and taken to Don Bosco prison.

May 6 1972 - 12.30pm

Serantini interrogated in prison by sub procurator Sellaroli.

May 6 1972 - 16.30

Prison doctor Alberto Mammoli examines Serantini and writes: "Bruising right eyebrow; numerous contusions partly abraded on the back, arms and lower legs; state of shock; Sympatol-Cortigen ice bag permanently in situ".

May 7 1972 - 9.45

After 32 hours of agony, of atrocious suffering, anarchist comrade Franco Serantini dies. The certificate written by Dr Alberto Mammoli speaks of a "cerebral haemorrhage". An attempt is made to make his body disappear in fret and fury.

May 7 1972 - 16.30

Director of Don Bosco prison sends an employee with death certificate to the Town Hall to ask for permission to have Franco buried. The employee on duty refuses to sign the authorization. At 17.30 the prison direction solicits authorisation.

May 12 1972

The "Governor of Toscana" General Procurator of the Republic Mario Calamari advocates the judicial inquest to himself and magistrate Sellaroli takes care to formalize the trial to prevent the transfer of the inquest to Florence.

June 12 1972

Instructing judge of 'Democratic Judiciary', Paolo Funaioli deposits the sentence which follows his investigations. There are dozens of parliamentary interpellations and interrogation. Someone sues. The newspaper articles and Left reviews are the democratic cover of the system.

October 5 1972

The instructing judge Paolo Funaioli, downgraded at Calamari for his inquest which could lead to fixing responsibility on the prison doctor, Dr Mammoli, and Captain of the P.S. Albini, is transferred from the penal to the civil law tribunal.

October 25 1972

The medical-legal report is deposited while the conflict continues between Calamari and the Pisa judges.

November 30 1972

Dr Alberto Mammoli, Pisa prison doctor, is sent to trial for culpable homicide. In the meantime the Commissaire Pironomonte resigns from the police because he has become disgusted by his work as hangman, but he does not supply the names of the police who massacred Franco.

May 2 1973

The High Court Council turns down Calamari's proposal and confirms judge Funaioli in his post.

May 21 1973

The General Prosecutor asks instructing judge Funaioli to acquit the pigs "for having remained unknown" and Dr Mammoli because "the deed does not constitute a crime".

September 14 1973

After a whole series of conflicts between Calamari and Funaioli, the judge asks for Captain Albini to be tried for "giving false evidence" and other officers concealing the names of Franco's slaughterers.

January 1 1974

Judge Funaioli "spontaneously" asks to resign. Judge Angelo Nicastro takes his place.

April 23 1975

Judge Angelo Nicastro concords with Calamari in deciding not to continue proceedings against Dr Mammoli "for not having committed the deed" and limits himself to sending Captain Albini and the police guard Colantoni to trial for false witnessing.

October 1 1975

The magistrates' court sentences the two pigs to six months' suspended sentence.

February 1977

Appeal trial of Captain Albini and the guard Colantoni where they are acquitted.

March 31 1977 - 8am

After the sentence of bourgeois justice, the proletarian one has arrived. Justice has taken its course. "The Serantini case seemed to be closed", writes Paese Sera. Text claiming the revolutionary action Justice for Franco Serantini

Franco Serantini was lynched by police in 1972 and left in agony to the death by Dr Mammoli because he was guilty of anti-fascism. Mammoli has not been eliminated because others are just as guilty as he is, but he is politically, humanly and professionally co-responsible for the assassination of the anarchist Franco Serantini. This behaviour does not differ from that of other doctors in Italian prisons.

April 30 1977, at 5.15 am, two explosions take place in Milan, one at the employment office, the other at the Opel car showroom of the multinational General Motors.

COMMUNIQUE RELATIVE TO ACTIONS IN MILAN

During the night groups of comrades have more or less symbolically struck a series of objectives which represent "clean work": above all the employment office, certainly a marginal instrument in the market of capitalist work, but which symbolizes the bosses' and reformists' will to "employ" us in any way whatsoever in the field of exploitation. At the Milan Opel we wanted to strike a part of that monstrous coagulation of German capital which tortures and destroys our comrades in West Germany.

May 1 1977, 5.5 am, three bombs explode in Turin, one at the SIP telephone centre, one at the employment office in via Gioberti, one at the Michelin in via Livorno.

COMMUNIQUE RE TURIN ACTIONS

"We are the Azione Rivoluzionaria groups for the abolition of salaried work".

July 17 1977, Florence and Livorno

COMMUNIQUE RE ATTACKS AGAINST CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW PRISONS IN FLORENCE AND LIVORNO

Today, July 17 1977, the construction of the new "model prisons" have been struck and sabotaged. True concentration camps (tombs for the living where prisoners are completely annihilated), struck contemporaneously in Florence and Livorno, cities where the technical-operative action was possible.

The precise intent was to single out, denounce and combat the criminal project of capitalist restructuring which resolves class antagonism through the annihilation

tion of proletarians, revolutionaries and opposers to its homicidal plans. The comrades reaffirm the unity of the class movement in solidarity and resistance with the proletariat who have been round up by capital and the State.
Freedom for the comrade prisoners.

August 2 1977, IPCA, Cirié.

ATTACK AGAINST THE IPCA OF CIRIÉ, THE "CANCER FACTORY"

Here *Azione Rivoluzionaria*, we are claiming the night bombing of the headquarters of the IPCA in Cirié.

September 18 1977, Turin

COMMUNIQUE RELATIVE TO THE ATTACK AGAINST "LA STAMPA" OF TURIN AND THE JOURNALIST OF "L'UNITA" FERRERO

Between 17 and 18 September 1977, the armed nucleus of AR "Rico and Attilio" struck the headquarters of "La Stampa" in Turin and the journalist of "L'Unita" Nino Ferrero. A bomb intended to cause great damage to the structure without injuring the people there was left at the headquarters; the journalist of "L'Unita" was kidnapped. With these two armed interventions *Azione Rivoluzionaria* meant to sanction precise personal and collective responsibility concerning the management of the news relative to the deaths of our comrades Aldo Marin Pinones "Rico" and Attilio Di Napoli, fallen while they in turn were preparing to strike the headquarters of the Fiat newspaper in the framework of a complexive action, unfortunately tragically interrupted.

In unison, police and factory council shriek out against this "attack on the freedom of the press" once again pulling a veil over the reality of things: we did not intend to strike the freedom of the press and communications, but the shameless campaign of lies and calumny carried on by the pennyliners of the regime towards the growing movement of proletarian opposition, conscious that to the "arms of criticism" the time has come to substitute them with the "criticism of arms".

With this armed intervention we meant to and intend to establish with force the truth about our comrades "Rico" and Attilio...

"Rico" was a fighter for freedom and communism in his country of origin: Chile. He fought with all his might against Pinochet's regime, paying in first person. Outside his country he took up arms once again, knowing that the proletarian class struggle does not know national boundaries. Rico fought in other South American countries, he fought in Italy against the Christian Democrat regime and the historic compromise—to cite only a few of his actions are those which we have an interest in indicating—the destruction of the new prisons in Florence and Livorno and the explosion against the IPCA of Cirié.

Attilio was every generous comrade, very young, capable of choosing and deciding in the midst of a corrupt and mendacious world, conscious of having to overcome the dichotomy between thought and action, ready for anything with the sure instinct of young proletarians convinced that they have nothing to lose but everything to gain. Attilio participated in various actions distinguishing himself for his courage and revolutionary knowledge.

"Rico" and Attilio fell due to a technical error...

"Rico" and Attilio live in the memory of all revolutionaries. Other hands will take up the arms fallen from them in battle. Their slanderers appear for what they are: vile dogs in the pay of the security services.

BUILD THE MOVEMENT OF ARMED STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNISM AND FREEDOM

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION AGAINST THE BERLINGOTTIAN GOVERNMENT DESTROY THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS OF PROLETARIAN ANNIHILATION

LONG LIVE COMBATANT CHILE. LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM. HONOUR TO THE COMRADES FALLEN IN STRUGGLE. LET US FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF MARA, LUCA, SERGIO, ANNAMARIA, ANTONIO, DI RICO, ATTILIO.

September 21 1977

BOMB AT TURIN SPORTS CENTRE

The bomb at Ruffini park was placed by us of *Azione Rivoluzionaria* to strike the anti-communist congress of tomorrow. Moreover, tell the "Unita" journalist to remember what he wrote about the Chilean comrade and he'll understand why we shot him.

September 28 1977

LEAFLET RELATIVE TO AN ACTION CARRIED OUT IN MILAN

At 5 o'clock on September 28 a nucleus of *Azione Rivoluzionaria* partially interrupted the urban transport and distributed a leaflet signed the Industrial Confederation. We wanted to draw the workers' attention to the problem of torture and special prisons. Comrades will excuse us for having donned, but only for a moment, the foul clothing of the confederal secretaryship. The very thought that the trade union and party apparatus are sensitive to the problem of torture and the concentration camps is a serious and naive sin. If sometimes they have acted in these terms in the past, they have done it only instrumentally; once they are associated with power they soon exhaust their democratic characteristics to reveal the bloody face of power. Tomorrow they will not hesitate to shoot the workers, as they do today to the emarginated, killed like birds in the streets of Italy and as they do against the revolutionary comrades.

Comrades, let us take our indications from the comrades imprisoned in the Asinara. They write: "In the whole metropolitan area the anti-imperialist combatant prisoner is considered a hostage in the hands of the State which is tending to develop a double action in his regard: on the one hand treatment orientated towards the progressive destruction of his will, personality and political identity through isolation. On the other the propagandistic use of this as "deterrent" towards the revolutionary movement and proletarian forces. To this "treatment of war" the revolutionary movement engaged over the whole metropolitan areas in replying with "actions of war".

Comrades, let us reply to the State's attempt to annihilate us with just as many annihilation measures. The supporters of the hard line cannot believe that they can hide behind the shadow of General Della Chiesa, nor can the supporters of the soft line hide behind "the need for a political framework". They will all fall, swept away by the ruins of the concentration camps.

False leaflet of the Trade Union Confederation

REGIONAL DAY OF STRUGGLE PROCLAIMED BY THE CGIL, CISL, UIL FEDERATIONS AGAINST TORTURE, SPECIAL PRISONS AND THE REACTIONARY INVOLUTION WHICH IS BEING IMPOSED UPON THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

WORKERS,

The secretaryship of the CGIL/CISL/UIL Federation is calling you to a day of struggle against the reactionary involution in this country.

We take the words of Pierre Carniti, "We are in the presence of an involution which is going towards strangling democracy and political debate, and making the State omnipotent..."

The Confederal Secretaryship cannot fail to denounce the dangers inherent in this process which has in fact lead to the legalisation of torture against dissidents in Italy. The events of Puteano, Alcamo, Rome, among others, show how torture is becoming normal praxis against dissidents.

Moreover, the unions cannot ignore what is going on inside the prisons. They cannot accept the distinction, Byzantine to say the least, between advanced punitive prisons and concentration camps such as the Asinara. In fact, when a prisoner is held in a cell for 22 hours out of 24 and the two hours' recreation are spent in a cubicle covered by a metal net Vietnamese style, does he find himself in a special or a punitive prison? If every protest is punished with beatings right to the limits of survival, what should we think? Perhaps we should wait for a chain of "suicides" as in Stammheim before we begin to talk about special prisons? In Italy we already have the experience of the Aversa asylum...

To continue to remain silent on this subject would mean to give our own endorsement to this reactionary involution whose supporters are unfortunately present within the Trade Union movement.

In fact, to continue to deny the existence of political prisoners in Italy, as has been done by certain trade union leaders, means to support this process of liberty, as well as to deny the evidence which is before us; if political prisoners do not exist, what sense is there therefore in a law which discriminates between common law and other prisoners and asks for special treatment for them?

Through continuing to deny the evidence we shall find ourselves part of a process which will destroy not only freedom but truth.

COMRADE WORKERS, WE ARE ASKING YOU FOR A DAY OF STRUGGLE FOR THE ABOLITION OF TORTURE, SPECIAL PRISONS, TO CHECK THAT REACTIONARY TURN WHICH WANTS A SUBJECTED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, INERT AS WELL AS BLIND AND OBTUSE.

LET US UNMASK THE REACTIONARIES WHO ARE NESTING WITHIN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND WHO WANT ITS DEATH!

LET US ISOLATE THE STRANGLERS OF DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL DEBATE!

LET US RENDER THE SPIES OF THE NEW STATE HARMLESS!

The Milan Secretaryship of the CGIL-CISL-UIL Federation

Conference against repression, Bologna, September 23-25, 1977

DOCUMENT TO COMRADES OF THE MOVEMENT

We revolutionary militants of the combatant organization *Azione Rivoluzionaria* are addressing ourselves to all the comrades participating in the Bologna conference on Repression to point out a few things concerning the recent actions which we carried out in Turin, actions which have been meanly instrumentalized by the bourgeois press and hangers on.

The first thing to clarify is *Lotta Continua's* function as informer, a paper which finds itself in the hands of a few profiteers of the revolutionary good faith of a number of comrades who still believe in the function of their paper. The accusations this rag has made against us are enough in themselves to qualify the whole conservative politics which the managing group of *Lotta Continua* intend to carry out over our comrades' heads, paying no attention to the indications of struggle which are coming from the movement. Having called us "fascist" because we have given a lesson he deserved to a CP servant and because we have bombed the largest newspaper of the industrial bosses, can no longer leave room for any doubts on the direction which *Lotta Continua* intend to give to the movement.

The second element which we want to point out is that we combatant militants of *Azione Rivoluzionaria* are here together with you participating in the conference against repression, because we do not consider ourselves a "military party" eradicated from the real struggle of the mass and communitarian moments of clarification. That is why we reject every attempt—no matter where it comes from—to make us pass for another version of the combatant parties which in fact are acting today in the reality of the Italian and international revolutionary movement.

Our aim is to realize a combatant structure which is as open as possible towards the base, one which allows for the massive participation of the exploited, emarginated, the non-guaranteed and all those who want to attack the boss class and their servants without a military party filtering this base and taking over the direction of the struggles.

This is our concept of armed struggle. Simple and not demagogic. Today armed struggle is not only a project but a reality, a reality that no servant of the CP or *Lotta Continua* can ever mystify.

We have attacked the CP, against whom so many revolutionaries have reversed burning criticism in words, calling them one of the main sources of reaction. This can only seem in appearances to be a bold step forward. In fact we have done nothing more than realize what many comrades theorize.

Future struggles will always be directed towards clarifying both the role of the reaction and the so-called parties of the left, and the no less reactionary role of whoever, disguising themselves as revolutionaries, intends to put a brake on the self-organization of the armed struggle of the exploited.

January 1978—First theoretical document published

February 24 1978 a bomb explodes during the night in corso Garibaldi 88, Milan, the administrative offices of *Corriere della Sera*

THE BUNKER OF FREEDOM

The *Corriere della Sera* is equipping itself to face the new run of Italian freedom. Freedom, the various directors which for some time have been alternating at the helm of this prestigious truth machine will say, is such a precious and rare value that it is worth protecting, even inside in bunker.

Obscure pennyliners of the *Corriere*, insensitive to any change in ownership or management (but not salary), Custer will send you to the slaughter. Don't believe you are secure in your bunker, many other fortresses have had to give in to truth and this has never disdained to use dynamite...

Leaflet handed out in Carrara, at the Third International Anarchist Congress of the Anarchist Federations, held 23-26 March 1978.

6 April 1978, Rome

Here *Azione Rivoluzionaria* claiming the bombing of the *Banco di Roma* headquarters in via Cernaia, the Ferrari dealer in via Pinciana and the car showroom in via Palmiro Togliatti.

Bombing of Christian Democrat premises in Aosta

During the night between the 18th and 19th June we struck the headquarters of the Christian Democrats of Aosta. This, as a warning, until they revoke the permission granted to the MSI to continue to speak in the squares of Aosta; because the DC is a symbol of speculation, exploitation, of which the Leone case is but an example. The DC wants us to come out into the streets to make us fight with the fascists and be massacred by the police. We will not allow other comrades to be killed in the streets and so we are using these arms against the fascists and those who allow them to talk. This action is the demonstration of our strength and intention. It is only the beginning.

LET US CREATE 10, 100, 1,000 ARMED NUCLEI.

Bombing of I.B.M. in Turin July 23 1978

Here *Azione Rivoluzionaria*, nucleus of direct attack Rico and Attilio, we have struck the I.B.M. multinational.

29 July 1978, "Gazzetta del Popolo" editorial offices bombed.

We have struck the headquarters of the *Gazzetta del Popolo* to remind all the regime's pennyliners that hundreds of revolutionary comrades are dying in the Italian prison-concentration camps. This action is in memory of all the comrades killed during actions against the State.

Create ten, a hundred, a thousand armed nuclei.

whoever has worked without exploiting others, not only has never been able to save, but hasn't even had enough to satisfy his own hunger.

Look at the example you have before your very eyes. Doesn't everything the workers produce end up in the hands of the bosses who just stand looking on?

Otto Rühle

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM BEGINS WITH THE STRUGGLE AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

pp. 28

50 pence

There can be no question that parliamentarianism is entirely degenerated and corrupt. But, why didn't the proletariat stop this deterioration of a political instrument which once had been used for their purposes? To end parliamentarianism by one heroic revolutionary act would have been far more useful and educational for the proletarian consciousness than the miserable theatre in which parliamentarianism has ended up in the fascistic society. But such an attitude was entirely foreign to Lenin, as it is foreign today to Stalin. Lenin was not concerned with the freedom of the workers from their mental and physical slavery; he was not bothered by the false consciousness of the masses and their human self-alienation. The whole problem to him was nothing more or less than a problem of power. Like a bourgeois, he thought in terms of gains and losses, more or less, credit and debit; and all his business-like computations deal only with external things: membership figures, number of votes, seats in the parliaments, control positions. His materialism is a bourgeois materialism, dealing with mechanisms, not with human beings. He is not really able to think in socio-historical terms.

Alfredo M. Bonanno

ANARCHISM AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

(New revised edition)

pp. 28

50 pence

Anarchism is internationalist, its struggle does not confine itself to a certain region or specific area in the world, but extends everywhere at the flanks of the proletariat who are struggling for their own liberation...The essential and determining point we are making here is that there is no difference between exploiters, the fact of being born in one place has no influence on class divisions. The enemy is he who exploits, organizing production and distribution in a capitalist dimension, even if this exploiter calls us compatriot, party comrade, or by whatever pleasing epithet.

In Print

Alfredo M. Bonanno

CRITIQUE OF SYNDICALIST METHODS

pp. 48

50 pence

In our opinion it is time we made every effort to clarify a few essential points, so that anarchist comrades understand that it is not enough to declare oneself "anarcho-syndicalist" to be "within the reality of the workers' struggle" but we must know and understand what there is that is really revolutionary not only in trade unionism, but also in revolutionary and anarcho-syndicalism.

Alfredo M. Bonanno, Comrades of Kronstadt Editions, Turin railway workers' autonomous nucleus.

WORKERS' AUTONOMY (Revised Edition)

pp. 40

80 pence

The road ahead of the proletariat is blocked: the reformist parties, trade unions and employers have coalesced to obstruct any growth in the level of the struggle, or any conquests which could lead to a revolutionary transformation of production relations.

The proletariat have only one alternative: that of building communism directly, passing over the counter-revolutionary bureaucratic structures. In order to do this we must provide analyses of and realize in practice, elements organized by the base of the level of production: autonomous workers' nuclei.

ARMED STRUGGLE IN ITALY: A CHRONOLOGY 1976-78

pp. 96

120 pence

We see the present historic moment as being characterized by the state of latent illegality in which vast strata of society find themselves. Millions of young people, of unemployed and people on the margins of society having to use whatever means in order to survive... The practice of violent attack against the State which we are interested in developing is identifiable not only and not so much with the shooting in the legs of notorious Christian Democrats, but must permeate every aspect of the struggle, every field of intervention. For our attack to be effective we must be able to identify the structures and representatives of power in every city, every factory, every school, every quarter, every barracks, every institution, right to the relationships which exist among ourselves, and strike them with all the range of instruments and arms which our fantasy suggests.

BRATACH DUBH DOCUMENTS

No 1. THE ANGRY BRIGADE

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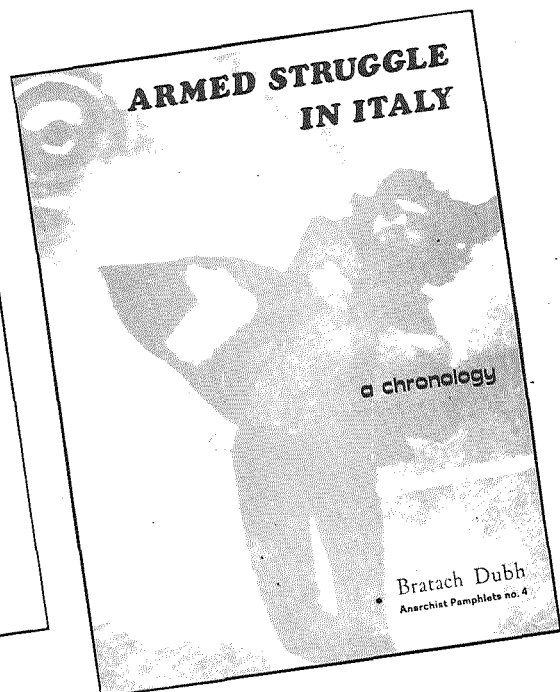
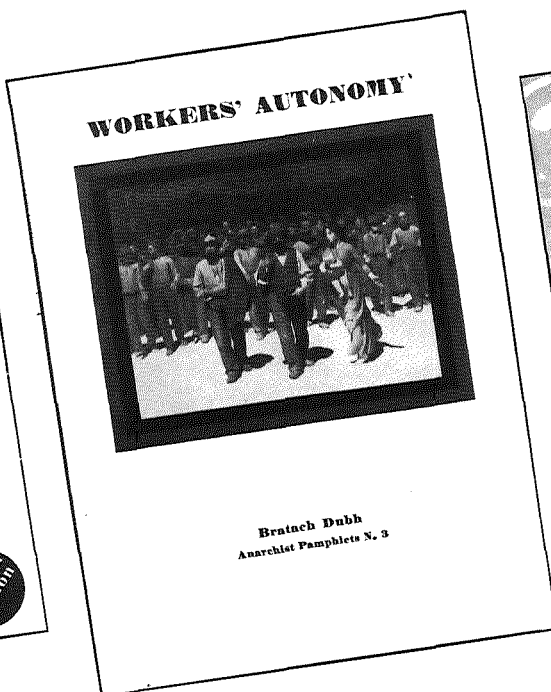
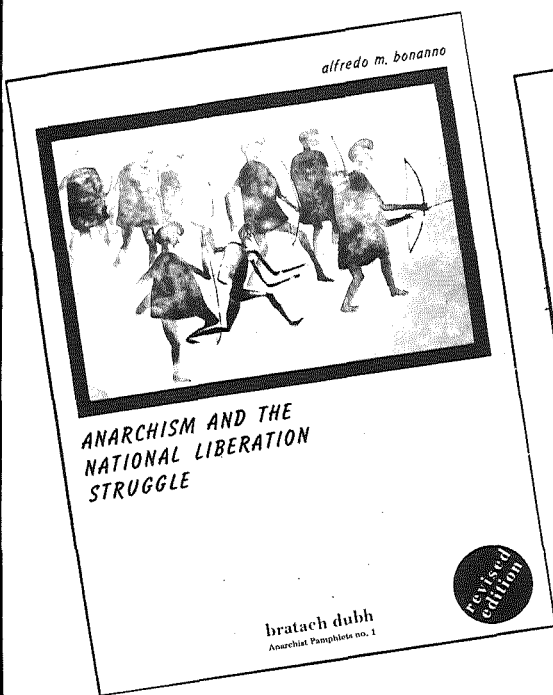
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